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BYGONE DAYS.

BY D. O. S.

I would that we had never met,
In days that now are past,
For oh! I never can forget
Those days too bright to last.

Ah! then what happiness was mine,
When thou wert by my side,
And whisp'ring ask'd my love for thine,
And me to be thy bride.

But now the time is past, when I
Alone possess'd thine heart,
And, knowing this, I breathe a sigh,
Then say that we must part.

Yet still, when thinking of the past,
My constant prayer shall be,
That thou may'st know and feel at last
The love I felt for thee.

With None Between.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LOVER AND LORD," "WITH A ROD OF IRON," "A MAD LOVE," "DOLLY'S LUCK," ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IV.

THE footsteps come nearer and nearer; they sound close behind her now. She turns, with that wild fancy filling all her thoughts, with a warmth of welcome as might satisfy the most jealous and exacting lover shining in her lovely eyes, and looks into a stranger's face.

No, not a stranger's face. She almost thinks for the moment the shock would have been less hard to bear if it were, for she would not have been forced to hide her keen disappointment so quickly, to assume a quick complacent smile, and force herself to utter words of friendly greeting, when she can hardly keep back her foolish tears. But she is a brave girl, and in a second the dropped mask is readjusted, the social armor fitted on.

"Lord Archdale!" she cries, extending her hand with the frankest friendliness, and smiling so brilliantly that only a keen observer would notice that the thick dark lashes were tear-wet. "I thought you were—well, I do not know exactly where, but out of England, at any rate."

He smiles, showing faultless white teeth under the long line of his moustache, looks at the brilliant face with obvious admiration, and holds the slim hand in rather a closer and longer pressure than politeness absolutely exacts.

"Then I infer one of two things, Miss Jephson—either that Mr. Jephson did not tell you of my intended visit, or you were cruelly uninterested in the fact."

She colors quickly and painfully under the keen gaze of the gray-green eyes, stung, not by the half-jesting reproach, but by the recollection that she was of such small importance in the house that had called her mistress for so long.

"I did not know," she says, with the quick defiant smile that has become habitual to her now. "You know there have been great changes since we met, Lord Archdale."

"I know," he interrupts quickly. "I met Mr. and Mrs. Jephson in Paris, and offered my congratulations there. As the invitation was given then, it is quite possible it may have slipped the bridegroom's memory, in which case I had perhaps better go back as I came. Will you keep my secret, Miss Jephson? Or, what is still better, will you promise me a welcome at the Elms?"

He rattles on lightly and easily in the most natural way, giving Kitty time to collect her thoughts, and the girl feels her heart grow suddenly warm to him.

"I can promise you mine at least," she says, with unmistakable sincerity. "I am rather weary of a tete-a-tete a trois."

It is not the most flattering speech that could be made, is not perhaps quite what Lord Archdale expects and feels to be his due, but it is a wonderful concession from proud fastidious Kitty.

"That is the welcome I most prize," he says, his soft languid voice dropping a tone or two lower, and he draws a shade closer to her side. She is very handsome, he thinks, handsomer than ever with that new light of pride and anger in her eyes, and he has always admired Kitty Jephson in his half-hearted indifferent way, though she has never shown any particular liking for him.

"But she is evidently out of it at the Elms, poor girl, and will turn to me for support and sympathy now," he meditates, with placid satisfaction. "Well, there are more unpleasant tasks than winning her confidence will be. I am glad that blue-eyed, yellow-haired artist fellow is out of the way; it was quite distressing to see her waste her fascinations upon him. She really is a superb creature."

"You have not been in England long, then?" Kitty asks, as they enter the lodge gate. She is conscious of Lord Archdale's admiration, though a little amused by it too, for in her eyes the well-preserved peer is quite an elderly man; but she has not the faintest idea of the plans that are being concocted in his subtle brain.

"I am only just back; I spent a couple of months in Rome. By the way, I met a friend of yours there."

Two splendid roses suddenly bloom under the shadow of the big straw hat; but Miss Jephson repeats in a calmly interrogative tone—

"A friend of mine?"

"Yes; I fancy I have seen him with you—a young fellow named—Tush, how foolish of me to forget the name! I should remember it, for he has set up a studio that is a good deal talked about, and is quite one of the lions, especially among the American set."

"Was it"—Miss Jephson bites the full under-lip in sharp rebuke for its rebellious quiver—"was the name Oscar Clifford?"

"Oscar Clifford, of course! A blue-eyed, curly-haired, Adonis-like young fellow, awfully petted and spoiled, but an excellent artist, of whom the critics predict great things. He struck me as being a shade theatrical and affected. But"—with sudden recollection—"I really beg your pardon, Miss Jephson, I am speaking of your old friend."

"Of my old friend," Kitty repeats deliberately; "but you have said nothing very unkind, Lord Archdale, nothing that a friend is bound to resent. And did Mr. Clifford speak of his old friends in England?"

"Not much," Lord Archdale answers, with a little smile, as though at some amusing reminiscence. "But you and his other friends must forgive his oblivousness, Miss Jephson; the poor fellow is head over ears in love, and will be married very soon."

Just for one moment Kitty Jephson feels a frantic fear that she shall faint and disgrace herself for ever, for her heart seems to stand still, her eyes grow dim, and there is a sound in her ears like the rush of many waters. Then suddenly she hears herself saying, with extraordinary vivacity, and in a quite natural-sounding voice—

"Really, Lord Archdale, you surprise me; that is a piece of news! And who is the bride, or is that a secret as yet?"

"No secret at all," Lord Archdale answers carelessly, though he feels his admiration increase a hundredfold as he meets the full gaze of the brilliant eyes that will not droop to hide their pain.

"It was more of a blow than I thought," he decides; "and, by George, what pluck the girl has to bear shock upon shock so well! She would do credit to any station, to any man's taste. Why, even I—bah, what folly am I turning my thoughts to now?"

Kitty's clear voice cuts his musings short as she says, with a little laugh—

"If it is no secret, why not tell it then? I should like to know the lady's name."

"There is no secret, or rather there is only that dreadful treacherous memory of mine. It is Margaret or Magdalen Grant; no, Grandison, that is it—Miss Margaret Grandison!"

"Have you seen her?"

"Oh, yes; Miss Greta Grandison was the beauty of the year—the American beauty and heiress to whom we were all doing homage this season! So you see Mr. Oscar Clifford is winning all along the line."

"I am very glad." The words are bravely spoken; but, oh, the rapture of relief that thrills through every nerve of Kitty Jephson's frame as she sees her father coming down the broad white steps!

"Papa," she cries, with such spontaneous delight in meeting him as she has certainly not felt or shown since the never-to-be-forgotten day of the second Mrs. Jephson's home-coming, "here is Lord Archdale! I met him coming from the station."

Mr. Jephson shakes his guest's hand heartily, but seems a little confused. He is a fair, florid, large-limbed man of the country gentleman rather than the financier type, with patriarchal white hair, and a simple good-natured face, which is only redeemed from absolute weakness by a pair of very keen and clear gray eyes.

"My dear fellow, a thousand apologies!" he says earnestly. "I am shocked that there was no one to meet you at the station; but the fact is, I had forgotten—no, not your visit, I assure you, we have been looking forward to that, but the time of your train."

Lord Archdale laughs a light airy laugh, which is significant for all its good-natured ring.

"My dear Mr. Jephson, you had the best excuse in the world for letting your invitation and my acceptance of it slip your memory. And I had the fairest and kindest of conductors, though Miss Jephson very honestly admitted that to see me here was a complete surprise."

"Oh, Kitty! Kitty perhaps did not know," Mr. Jephson returns hurriedly and awkwardly, and his glance just sweeps his daughter's face with a wistful appeal. But Kitty makes no response to that look, does not even see it. An hour ago she might have been stung to the quick by the little scene that set her absolute unimportance of her father's house so clearly before a stranger's eyes, but not now. Her every thought is concentrated in the fierce effort to hide that other anguish that is gnawing at her heart.

Mechanically she accompanies her father and Lord Archdale into the pretty, rose-scented, shadowy drawing-room where Mrs. Jephson sits, looking very cool and tranquil in a faintly-tinted dress of Indian muslin and old lace.

She half rises from her lounging-chair, and greets the guest without a trace of her husband's conscious awkwardness or Kitty's frank surprise, extending a slim white-lace shaded arm, on which the slight gold bangles tinkle musically, and saying, in a soft voice—

"Most welcome to the Elms; but how shocking that you should have walked here this hot day!"

"I enjoyed my walk, I assure you, and Miss Jephson showed me the way."

"Oh, Kitty!" Mrs. Jephson's full blue eyes rest pensively upon her step-daughter's face. "Kitty is such an indefatigable walker—it tires me to even think of what she does!"

Lord Archdale smiles, and Mrs. Jephson thinks that there is decided admiration in his eyes—as indeed there is, but it is for the superb health and activity of the girl she is indirectly trying to disparage—not, as she fondly hopes, for her languid self.

Mrs. Jephson is one of the many women who persistently pose for and are oddly accepted as beauties in this unnaturally artistic age—long of limb and angular of outline, with a face that in profile suggests nothing so strongly as the crescent moon, a sallow skin, fair eyebrows and hair, and large expressive eyes of palest china-blue—roughly speaking, she has not what can be called one good point, but, by accentuating and insisting upon all her bad ones, she forces a small circle to admit that what she is so proud of must be good.

She is perfectly well aware of the strong contrast she and her former friend and present step daughter afford, but does not for a moment doubt that the advantage is all on her own side. Kitty is a "fine animal," she tells herself complacently, but "fine animals" are out of date. The superb young creature with the red-and-white skin, healthily bronzed by sunshine and fresh air, the great lustrous eyes that shine not in swift sidelong glance, but frankly and fully from beneath their dusky fringes, the coils of ebon hair twisted in firm masses about the small graceful head; the well-developed figure and firm swift movements that tell of health and strength—all these things seem coarse and absolutely unattractive to the woman who sees the modern ideal of feminine grace and beauty realized in her ethereal self.

But, perhaps because he is so much older and has fallen behind the spirit of the age, Lord Archdale is by no means of his hostess's opinion; the more he sees of Kitty Jephson the more entirely and intensely he admires her; whereas Mrs. Jephson, though she consciously exerts her fascinations for his benefit, strikes him only as being a rather tiresome representative of a by no means attractive class.

"I hate those limp fair-haired women with their affectations and absurd airs!" he reflects, as he dons the white neck-tie and black coat of civilization, and surveys his own face with unusual attention.

What he sees there does not quite please him; the failing light shows up lines and wrinkles he seems never to have suspected before—a fact that perhaps accounts for the acerbity with which he criticizes his unconscious hostess now. For some reason he does not care to define, he would like to look his very best to-night among these undistinguished people in this unimportant house.

"The woman is dull and second-rate in every way. Something of a Tartar, too, if there is any truth in those thin lips," he muses. "I wonder what Jephson could have seen in her to lose his head about when he had such a rare type of beauty in his own home to teach him better sense. For the girl is really superb; and she has sense and spirit as well as beauty. By George, what a sensation she would make in town! I envy the man who discovers her. I almost think——"

Again he breaks off at that crucial point, frowning in a way that brings all the fine wrinkles about his mouth and eyes into an ugly prominence, and adds at least ten years to his apparent age.

When he enters the drawing-room ten minutes later, faultlessly attired, he looks, with his slim erect figure and alert movements, a well-preserved handsome man of forty-five or fifty at the very most; but few people would have accorded him less than sixty years, as he stood scowling grimly at his own reflection in the glass.

Meanwhile the girl who all unconsciously had caused this tumult in his ordinarily tranquil breast is bearing her own agony above, fighting as she has never fought yet, though her conflicts of late have been many and severe.

"Is life to be all like this," she cries, in her feverish pain—"all disappointment, all cruel shock? Is there no one I can trust, no one who will be true to me? Oh, how can I bear it? It is too hard—too hard!"

Her cheeks are hot, her eyes blaze through her tears, her long black hair uncoils itself and lies in a great silken knot upon her shoulder, her hands are clenched as in the tension of some fierce physical pain. If Lord Archdale admires her in milder moods, he would find her gloriously beautiful now.

Presently the storm of indignation exhausts itself, as such tempests will; the tear-drops cease to fall, the girl dries her eyes, and she cries with fierce self-scorn—

"But why should I blame Oscar? He was free; he had a right to be happy in his own way; the fault was never his, but mine. What right had I to think that he would wait, would repent the bitter words with which he left me, and come back to me again?"

Kitty did not know how absolute was her trust in Oscar Clifford's love until she felt the cruel shock of its overthrow. True, she had sent him from her, or rather he had gone in jealous anger that even then she felt to be partly just; but how her heart throbs and her face flames as she recalls that moment now! She had frankly owned her love, had gratefully accepted his, had begged him to be patient for a little while, to work hard for her sake, to win name and fame for her.

"I wonder whether he knows that I am waiting still," she thinks, with a wild laugh—"waiting to receive the shock of a second unexpected marriage, to read the announcement of his, as, but for Lord Archdale's careless gossip, I should have read it in the first column of the Times? I am glad that I have escaped that, or perhaps he would have sent me wedding-cards. Now there is breathing-time at least, and perhaps——"

The loud clang of the first dressing-bell recalls her sharply to present things. Not for all the world could offer her, not to ease the fierce gnawing pain at her heart, would proud Kitty be late or ill-arrayed to-night.

With the aid of the trim girl who waits upon her, and is more devoted to her young mistress than ever, since she alone takes orders from her now, her toilette is soon made, her abundant hair piled up in coronet fashion and fastened with a coral pin; an amber-tinted dress, half lace and half cashmere, fits closely to her stately supple form, and floats in misty folds about her feet. The girl, her task done, regards Kitty with admiring and proprietorial pride.

"You never dressed quicker, miss, and you never looked more noble than you do to-night!" she exclaims, with a quaint frank flattery at which it is impossible to take offence. "All that gold stuff throws you up like, and makes you look like a queen."

Kitty smiles, and turns her bright restless eyes to the tall glass that reflects the stately young figure from head to foot, and, unlike Lord Archdale, her smile does not fade as she looks. The girl's innocent pride is justified. She has never been more brilliant, more beautiful than she is to-night. The storm of passion, which would have left some women limp and languid, and transformed others into red-eyed swollen-featured frights, has left small trace on her, or, rather, it seems to have left a new fire in her glance, more bloom upon her fresh velvety skin. She is as little vain as a young and handsome girl who is carelessly familiar with her own good looks can be; but she does feel vaguely comforted by her own reflection now, though that comfort is at the best forlorn and fleeting enough.

"You have done wonders for me, Harriet," she says pleasantly, "and it is lucky, for I foolishly delayed dressing till the last moment, although I had set my heart on looking my best to-night."

"I wonder why?" Harriet thinks, following her young mistress with wistful and affectionate eyes. "It is not like Miss Kitty to say that, for, beautiful young lady as she is, she is careless as careless can be about her looks. I hope she does not mean to take up with that old lord, though indeed it would be no wonder if she married him to escape from her home, where everything is so changed, and where she must be wretched now, though she is too proud to show even to me what she suffers. I suppose it would be a great thing to be Lady Archdale, and my lord is a fine handsome man, though I don't like his face. Some day, I am sure, when he has got over his temper and painted a big picture that sets all the papers praising him, Mr. Oscar Clifford will come back, and he and Miss Kitty will be happy in their own way, which, if I have any eyes in my head, is the only way for them."

And while her maid, with an affectionate simplicity of belief, plans an idyllic future for her, Kitty Jephson, with a new fire in her lustrous velvety-brown eyes and a bright flush on her face, listens with every sign of flattering favor to Lord Archdale's well-turned compliments and suave soft speech—listens, smiles, and draws him on with such conscious coquetry as the proud, frank girl has never stooped to before, and all the time is thinking with fierce and passionate pain—

"This man admires me already; I can make him love me if I choose. Perhaps Oscar may read of my marriage before his own takes place—may see that I have not 'waited,' after all."

Truly Mrs. Monk judged wisely when she said her young friend was in a reckless dangerous mood, and ripe for any mischief that might come in her way.

CHAPTER V.

A WEEK passes away, and Lord Archdale is still a visitor at the Elms, with no apparent intention of taking an immediate departure, though, as he laughingly protests, his host and hostess must have begun to look upon him as a fixture by now.

"But really it is impossible to tear ourself away from this Eden of yours," he says, addressing Mrs. Jephson, but fixing his eyes upon Kitty, who stands just out of earshot in the open French window, with the look of weariness that dims its vivid beauty from time to time very visible now on her fair proud face. "You do not know what this visit has done for me, Mrs. Jephson. Before I came I was feeling old, weary, and bored to death with the dreary grind of life; but here, in some miraculous fashion, I seem to have renewed my youth. I feel a boyish pleasure in existence, and I owe all this delightful change to the Elms and to you."

Mrs. Jephson smiles a somewhat acid smile and politely says something of the pleasure she most certainly does not feel. In fact, she is hardly less torn by conflicting feelings than Kitty herself and it says much for her sense and self-control that she is able to manage even that dubious smile and non-committal speech; for nothing would give her greater pleasure than to say in plain words that, so far as she is concerned, his visit has lasted long enough and need never be renewed.

But Mrs. Jephson make it a fixed principle never to yield even a spiteful impulse, however great the temptation may be. The impulse is always dangerous and the spite will always keep, is the conclusion at which the narrow-minded woman arrives; and in her most malignant moments she keeps that conclusion steadily within sight, and neither by look nor word betrays the wound her vanity has received.

And yet that wound stings and smarts sorely. She has so looked forward to Lord Archdale's visit; she has been so sure that he admired her in Paris, that he would be her courtier and attendant here.

"Men of that stamp do not care for girls," she had thought complacently; "they find married women safer and more amusing at the same time. I do not suppose he would give a second look at Kitty, even if she were the sort of girl to get up a flirtation with him, which, to do her justice, she is not. No doubt she will think him an old man, somewhere on a level with her father. Just because he is not a chattering boy, with a wax-doll sort of face, all his distinction and high-bred manner will be lost on her. He and I will be quite thrown upon one another for companionship, I see."

Before the eagerly-expected guest has been an hour in the house the poor lady's visions have floated away, and bitter mortification reigns in their place. From the very first Lord Archdale has thoughts, eyes, and compliments only for Kitty; and, of all the rich feast of flattery and flirtation she expected, not so much as one crumb has fallen to her share.

It is an exasperating experience for the woman who is accustomed to triumph over her step-daughter at every turn, and one on which she can hardly demand her husband's sympathy. At first she finds some relief in the thought of quarreling with Kitty and making herself supremely disagreeable to her unsatisfactory guest; but quite suddenly her purpose changes. She calls philosophy to her aid, finds the silver lining to the cloud, and discovers the possibility of future good in what seemed an unmitigated evil at first.

"Kitty actually encourages him," she decides, with a fleeting wonder at the fact, which is a curious unconscious testimony to her step-daughter's honesty. "I never saw her give any one so much encouragement before; and he evidently does something more than admire her. Curious that a man of his type should be taken by a girl of hers, but, after all, rather a lucky thing for me. I will forgive Lord Archdale for his lack of taste if he will only marry her and take her away."

And, in this expression of opinion, Mrs. Jephson is perfectly sincere. The wound to her vanity rankles and festers still, and will be repaid by many a stinging speech and subtle stab in the days to come; but she is quite sensible enough to see that the removal of the girl whose presence is at once an irritation and reproach, will be an infinitely greater gain than the most delightful æsthetic flirtation.

"It might have been charming, but must have been over soon," she thinks, as she leans lazily back in her lounging-chair, waving her peacock-feather fan to and fro and watching Lord Archdale keenly from under her languid lids, as he walks across the room and joins Kitty in the open window. "I am thankful that things have turned out in this way. I wonder how soon he will propose; whether Kitty knows that she may place a coronet over those black braids of hers soon. She will find it an irresistible temptation, like any other girl; and then, my proud step-daughter, I think you will find you have sold yourself."

But, needless to say, she keeps all her feelings, the triumph and mortification alike, discreetly to herself; and when Kitty, on her companion's approach, turns restlessly back into the room, she smiles a smile from which all the acidity has vanished, and begins a conversation in her suavest tone.

"Whom do you think I met this afternoon, Kitty? You will regret your refusal to join me on my round of calls when you hear."

"Shall I?" Kitty asks listlessly. She is looking down at the round white wrist, on which her fingers are idly twisting a broad silver band, and Lord Archdale is looking at her, as Mrs. Jephson notes with mingled satisfaction and rage. It is pleasant to think that Kitty will soon be moved from the Elms to a home of her own; but it is gall and wormwood to be neglected for any woman's sake. "Shall I?" the girl repeats, in the same careless tone. "That hardly seems likely, Helen; but let me judge for myself. Whom did you meet?"

"Mrs. Wentworth, walking with the little boy."

"No?" All the old vivacity comes back to Kitty's face and tone; she grows eager and interested at once—so eager and interested as to stir some feeling that is curiously like jealousy in Lord Archdale's seasoned breast. He begins vaguely and uneasily to scent a rival in the air, for why should the mention of one woman rouse such interest in another unless in the background there lurked some dangerously attractive man? "I wish I had gone with you indeed. I seem fated never to see Mrs. Wentworth, and she interests me so much. How is she looking now? Pretty as ever, of course?"

"Well, yes." Mrs. Jephson drawls out the last word in a reluctant and begrudging way. "She is pretty, no doubt, but not quite to my taste. I always think there is a pathetic look in those great shining eyes, and"—with much greater animation and force of conviction now—"she looks most painfully fragile—no, shockingly ill, and a skeleton form is not set off to advantage by a crape dress."

"Has she been ill?"

"She says not; but, if she has not, her looks belie her, and she has a cough that shakes her from head to foot. I am afraid our pretty and mysterious neighbor is in a very bad way."

"Don't!" Kitty exclaims, as though the words hurt her, as indeed they do, for she is a girl of quick and warm sympathies and strangely interested in the woman, of whom she knows little enough.

But Lord Archdale, still possessed by that strong idea that no woman ever cares for another, still seeks a clue to the enigma, and asks a little jealously—

"Who is this lady in whom Miss Jephson takes so warm an interest? A neighbor, I suppose? And yet I do not think I have heard her name."

"I dare say not," Mrs. Jephson answers carelessly. "Mrs. Wentworth is a widow—a young widow, though she must be six-and-thirty at least, and lives in seclusion at Conway Dell, a pretty place about a couple of miles from here."

"But the mystery, Mrs. Jephson? Pretty widows are not uncommon objects in society. What marks Mrs. Wentworth out from the rest of her class?"

"Well"—Mrs. Jephson knits her brows, and seems a little at a loss for words—"it is very absurd; we all have a very strong and definite impression that Mrs. Wentworth is not quite like other people: but I do not suppose any one of us could tell you where the difference lies. It is a sort of feeling we have, not exactly a suspicion."

"Certainly not a suspicion," Kitty breaks in warmly. "No one could look into Mrs. Wentworth's beautiful sad eyes, and even in one's thoughts couple her name with such an ugly word, but——"

"But you scent the mystery, too," Lord Archdale finishes with that cynical smile which plays about the corners of his thin moustached lips—the smile to which Kitty has a special dislike, since it always seems to her to take the worst for granted. She flushes hot indignantly now, and answers with generous warmth—

"Indeed no, Lord Archdale! All the neighborhood knows poor Mrs. Wentworth's story, which is quite as simple as it is sad. General Wentworth died about a year ago."

"Oh, you knew the husband, then!" Lord Archdale cries, with obvious surprise. In his own mind he has already set down the late spouse of the pretty and mysterious widow as a hypothetical personage at the least.

"Know him? Yes, we knew him long ago; he was the dearest, kindest, most chivalrous old gentleman—the true type of an old soldier, with his fine clear-cut face and long gray moustache! I always thought they made such a picturesque pair; and his devotion to her was a pretty sight, though he was years older than she—old enough to be her father almost."

"And her devotion to him, I presume, was not quite so pronounced?"

"Well, not quite," Mrs. Jephson says, answering the smile, to which Kitty vouchsafes only an indignant glance, "though she was a very good wife; and I do not fancy he, at any rate, saw much fault in her."

"What a way to put it, Helen! You know he thought her perfect in every way."

Mrs. Jephson makes a little moue and shrugs her too slim shoulders with the graceful affectation to which she is prone.

"My dearest Kitty, a distinction without a difference! My phrases are a shade less high-flown than yours, but they mean precisely the same thing. General Wentworth was as infatuated as only an old husband with a young wife could be, and I will admit that your pet protege made made no ill use of the almost unlimited power placed in her hands. She was a blameless if rather frigid wife, and developed at the last into a devoted nurse."

Lord Archdale listens with a polite suppression of the cynical smile which does infinite credit to the command in which his facial muscles are held. To his quick sense of the ridiculous there is something delightfully droll in the lecture Mrs. Jephson delivers with so much aplomb, apparently quite forgetting that she, too, is the wife of an old man. Instinctively he glances across at Kitty, to see how far she appreciates the absurdity of the situation; but her face is gravely thoughtful, and he remembers then that she is the daughter of the "old man," and so perhaps the least likely person to see the point of the joke.

"Very interesting," his lordship murmurs with more politeness than veracity, for in truth the subject that broke up his tete-a-tete with with Kitty has began to bore him already. But his hostess seems to expect some sort of comment on her story, and so he says to her, "And is your charming neighbor childless as well as a widow?"

"Oh, no, there is one child—a boy about ten years old, a handsome bright little fellow of whom the General was inordinately proud, and of whom he has left her

sole guardian: rather absurdly I think, as he will in all probability be called upon to fill a great place in the world some day!"

"A great place! Was his father's property so large, then?"

"His father's? No; his father left him well provided for—no more. But there is an immense entailed family property in the hands of his father's nephew—Sir George Wentworth—a poltrinaire who is compelled to spend his life abroad, traveling from one sunny spot to another, knowing all the time that his life hangs by the slenderest thread."

"Dear me! And do you see much of this young gentleman and his mother?"

"No; not nearly so much as I could wish," Kitty breaks in with energetic emphasis. "The boy we often meet on his little pony; George Wentworth is a great friend of mine."

Lord Archdale receives confirmatory evidence of this fact the next day; for, as he and Kitty walk down the queer old-fashioned High Street, they become aware of the quick pattering of light hoofs behind them, and, turning, find themselves pursued by a bright bay pony and a fair-haired boy.

"Miss Jephson, Miss Jephson!" the child cries breathlessly. "I thought I should not catch you; I never see you now."

"That is your fault, George," Kitty answers, smiling cordially. "I am always out and about; but you have been invisible lately."

The boy's face, so bright and animated a moment before, clouds a little now. It is a face singularly and delicately handsome, brilliantly blond as to complexion, and framed in a mass of soft waving hair of the true Saxon tint, but lighted up by a pair of eyes so darkly gray as to look almost black between their fringe of ebon lashes—eyes that can gleam with mirth on occasion, but, when they grow grave, as now, are intensely and most unchildishly sad.

Somehow those eyes and a certain nervous quiver about the clear-cut sensitive lips have a fascination for Lord Archdale, as he stands in obedient attention while Kitty speaks to her young friend.

They make a picturesque pair—the slim, dark-haired, handsome girl and her bright-haired young friend—as the morning sunlight falls upon them. But somehow, although Lord Archdale does something more than admire Kitty, and is the last man in the world to feign an interest in the most attractive child, it is the boy who wins most of his attention now.

"Where have I seen that face before?" he asks himself, and is astonished at the thrill that runs through his nervous system as the boy's voice, clear and singularly sweet as it is, falls upon his ear.

"No, I have not been out lately; mother has been so ill," the boy says wistfully. "Miss Jephson, will you not come and see her soon?"

Kitty looks surprised, and even colors a little, but answers very cordially—

"Most certainly I will, George, if it is your mother's wish; but somehow I thought she did not care for visitors just now. She told Mrs. Jephson she was not feeling very strong."

The boy's eyes grow dim and misty, as both Kitty and Lord Archdale see, though he turns them ostentatiously away.

"She is not," he says roughly; "and yesterday I heard nurse and mademoiselle talking; but they talk nonsense, I know. Come and see her, won't you? She does not want Mrs. Jephson or other visitors, but you always do her good."

"Do I, George? Then I will surely come. Give her my love, and say I will pay her a visit to-morrow."

The boy goes off then, apparently well pleased with the promise he has won. Kitty and her companion follow the pony's progress up the steep street with their eyes for a second or so, then pursue their way in a silence which the latter is the first to break.

"So that is the child of mystery—I really beg your pardon, Miss Jephson," he adds, with a quick change of tone and manner as he meets the girl's bright indignant glance. "I only meant the young hero of Mrs. Jephson's mystery. What a singularly handsome lad! Is he like his mother?"

"No, I think not—that is not very," Kitty answers, after a second's thought; "he is fair, like all the Wentworths, while she is a brunette; but there is something in the expression of the eyes——"

"Ah!" Lord Archdale's "ah!" is so prolonged and peculiar that Kitty turns and looks with some curiosity at his face; but that is impassive as usual, and he talks immediately of other things, though the girl has a haunting idea that he is slightly abstracted all the way home.

CHAPTER VI.

THE next morning Kitty, informing no one of her purpose, starts off to pay her promised visit to Conway Dell. The three-mile walk is nothing to the active healthy girl, who, having had so much of Lord Archdale's company of late, prefers her own now by way of change.

It is quite early—long before noon—when she reaches the pretty house embowered in the green trees that flourish in its park-like grounds. Little Georgie's quick eyes catch sight of her as she enters the long avenue, and he runs out to meet her with an effusively joyous greeting, which is sweet flattery to the proud warm-hearted girl.

"Oh, you are good to come, Miss Jephson!" he cries, holding her hand as he dances along beside her, and raising his soft pathetic dark eyes gratefully to hers. "Mother was pleased when I told her; but we did not expect you quite so soon."

"If I had not come so soon, I must have driven over in state with Mrs. Jephson and a guest of ours. Well, how is your mother to-day, Georgie?"

"Better—quite well!" the lad cries quickly. "She is in the music-room now, looking over some old songs and singing a little. Did you ever hear mother sing?"

"Never!" Kitty answers promptly; "I had no idea she sang."

"She never does now, except to me; but I thought perhaps that long ago, before she was so sorrowful, she might have sung for you."

Kitty thinks, but naturally does not say, that the days when Mrs. Wentworth was not sorrowful were the days before their paths crossed; but just at that moment a fragment of a song floats out to her on the softness of the summer air—a sound that makes her face flush and her heart throb quickly with sheer surprise and keen artistic delight.

"Georgie, is that your mother?" she asks, in a bewildered way; and the boy nods his head delightedly.

"Yes, come and listen! We need not go in just yet. Come here—on the verandah. I often stand here; it is like—like Heaven, I think, to hear mother sing."

Kitty thinks so too as she stands in the ivy-grown nook that Georgie indicates, almost fearing to breathe lest she should break the spell of that marvellous music. The melody is an old Latin hymn-tune sung by a pure, clear, perfect soprano voice—a voice that, without a touch of shrillness, rise clear and high and sweet.

As the last faint vibration dies away, Kitty Jephson seems to wake from some bewildering dream, to find the tears running down her cheeks and little Georgie watching her with eager sympathy.

"It makes you cry? I feel like that something, but I don't do it now; it is foolish for a boy!" he says with a queer little assumption of masculine superiority.

"You little goose!" she exclaims, more loudly than she has spoken yet, and the sound reaches Mrs. Wentworth's ears, for the curtain is drawn quickly back and Kitty finds herself confronted with a stare of displeasure and surprise.

Then for the first time it dawns upon the girl's mind that there may be something unconventional and irregular in her present proceeding. She has accepted Georgie's invitation without a thought, and played the part of unseen auditor; but, as she meets the angry eyes that are so like Georgie's own, she feels horribly guilty now.

"Forgive me, Mrs. Wentworth!" she cries, her handsome face growing red with vexed confusion. "I should not have listened, I know, but Georgie is responsible for my presence here—is responsible for my whole visit, indeed—and I never heard such music before."

The dark delicate face, which has softened involuntarily at mention of Georgie's name, grows stern and haughty once more as the girl utters the last phrase. Mrs. Wentworth bends her dark head with a movement so stiff as to be barely courteous, and says in her coldest tones—

"Oblige me by forgetting that you have heard it at all, and pray do not speak of it again!"

Kitty, feeling more thoroughly taken aback and uncomfortable than she has ever yet felt, murmurs some inaudible answer, and wonders, half angrily, how she shall make her escape from her present awkward position; but Georgie slips his little hand in hers, and squeezes it with imploring tightness, as he turns to the white-faced dark-eyed woman.

"Mother, say you are pleased to see Miss Jephson. She was so good to come, she is so good always to me!"

Kitty tries to check the child, tries to put in a proud disclaimer; but, before she can say anything, she sees a sudden change come over the delicate worn face. The sensitive lips and brows quiver, the eyes give a quick peculiar flash, and then comes a passionate rain of tears: the thin white hands are flung out with a pathetic gesture, and somehow—she never quite knows how it happens—Kitty Jephson finds herself within the room, sitting on a wide low couch, with her strong young arm flung in affectionate fashion round the black-robed wasted figure, and the dark head bowed on her breast.

They sit there for fully five minutes, Mrs. Wentworth sobbing, and Kitty murmuring broken sentences of reassurance, consolation, before either seems to realize the oddity of the situation, the little boy watching them for a few seconds, and then stealing quietly away, understanding in his strange unchildlike wisdom that his part in the small drama is played. Then the weeping woman raises her head.

"Forgive me, and do not think me quite mad, Miss Jephson," she says, with a pitiful break in the sweet voice; "I have not wept for Heaven knows how many weary years! I did not shed one tear when Georgie's father died. Why should I cry to-day?"

"Because you are weak and hysterical, I suppose," Kitty answers promptly, as she looks with compassionate eyes at the painfully fragile creature, who had repelled her with chill haughtiness a little while back, but who now seems to cling to her with helpless trust and fondness. "You look very weak, Mrs. Wentworth; you have been ill since I saw you last?"

The woman smiles—a wild pathetic smile that makes Kitty's kind heart ache. She raises the hand that lies on her lap—such a shadowy fragile hand, on the third finger of which the wedding-ring with difficulty keeps its place, and regards it with sombre satisfaction.

"Yes, I have been ill—I am ill; the doctor does not give me much hope of seeing the year out."

She speaks quietly, almost indifferently; but there is such full conviction in her tone, and her sharpened features, wasted form, and hollow dark-rimmed eyes so cruelly confirm her words, that all the bright color fades from Kitty's face, and it is with difficulty she manages to say with anything like an approach to her usual cheery manner—

"You must not nurse such morbid fancies, Mrs. Wentworth; they are bad for all around you as well as for yourself. Think of poor little Georgie."

"Do I think of him?" The question is a mere wailing cry; the dark eyes are full of passionate yearning pain. "It is hard to think of him and be content to go, when, but for him, I should be glad and thankful—oh, Heaven knows how thankful and how glad!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MILK FOLK-LORE.—Two families living near Clonlara, Ireland, had a quarrel about three years since regarding a supposed "Pishogue." It seems that for years the cows belonging to one man had given but little milk, and that proved so unwholesome to calves and pigs that several died. Believing that some spell was on the milk, the aggrieved owner consulted an old man not residing in that parish, who recommended him to watch the well which he and his neighbor used, and let no one come near it on May night (i. e., the night of April 30th) till midnight. The owner of the bewitched cows lay in wait, with his son, and saw a woman and young man of the suspected family come quietly to the well. Springing out, they prevented the wizard's approach, and a bitter torrent of abuse ensued. Midnight passed, and both contending parties went home. The plaintiff's cattle have since given good milk, owing, as he firmly believes, to his close watch over the well every subsequent May night.

NATIONAL PECULIARITIES.—A bet was once made in London that by a single question proposed to an Englishman, a Scotchman, and an Irishman, a characteristic reply would be elicited from each of them. Three representative laborers were accordingly called in, and separately asked, "What will you take to run round Russel Square stripped to your shirt?" While the Englishman unhesitatingly answered, "A pint of porter," the humorous response of the Irishman was, "A mighty great cold!" The man of the North, however, instead of condescending upon any definite "consideration," cautiously replied, with an eye to a good bargain, "What will your honor gie me?"

Bric-a-Brac.

TATTOO.—About the year 1703 the beats and calls of the drum then used in the service were put into a permanent shape. The tattoo, or beat of the drum calling soldiers to their quarters at night, was once called "tap-too," from the Dutch word signifying "no more drink to be tapped or sold."

OLDEST TREE IN THE WORLD.—The Rev. W. Tuckwell, in "Tongues in Trees and Sermons in Stone," says: "The oldest living tree in the world is said to be the Soma cypress of Lombardy. It was a tree forty years before birth of Christ." But Alphonse Karr, in his "Voyage autour de mon Jardin," says of the baobab: "It is asserted that some exist in Senegal that are 5000 years old."

ELECTRIC BATH.—Electric-light baths are among the latest inventions. The necessary parts of such a bath are a cabinet which enclose the entire except the head, and 50 electric lamps of 16-candle power each, or 110 volts, arranged about the body in groups, with a separate switch for each group. The light is thrown on a section at a time, making the patient frisky, and browning the skin like an ocean bath.

CHARM.—This word is from the Latin carmen. Originally it meant incantation. To charm a person is to bewitch him. In "Julius Cæsar," Act III, Scene 1, "I charm you," seems to mean "I adjure you." When we speak now of a charming woman, we do not imply that she sings an incantation to us; but there is a pretty figure of speech in our use of the word. We means that she has the same command over us as if the incantation were sung and we were bewitched.

MARKETING IN SPAIN.—It is not the custom for ladies to go to market in Madrid, and even the first cook in great houses disdains to expose herself to the jokes of the market women. It falls to the place of the second cook to do the marketing, and she prefers to pass her life in the position, for it has many perquisites. It is understood that she excels her commission on all she buys, and as prices vary this is easy without detection. "She is too dear" is sometimes said when a servant is discharged, but no imputation is made against her character.

A GREAT DEAL OF E'S.—Those readers who remember the "E-less" poem will, no doubt, be equally interested in the following literary oddity, a production containing 58 words, 112 e's, and no other vowels, says the St. Louis Republic: "We feel extreme feebleness when we seek perfect excellence here. We well remember men everywhere err. Even when Eden's evergreen trees sheltered Eve the serpent crept there. Yet, when tempted, when cheerfulness depressed, when helplessness fetters, when we seem deserted—then we remember Bethlehem; we beseech the Redeemer's help. We ever need the rest the blessed expect."

LAWYERS IN ICELAND.—Little attention is paid to law and lawyers in Iceland. There are but two of the legal fraternity on the island, both holding public offices. One is a kind of Public Prosecutor and the other is ready to defend any person who may be put on trial for crime. Both are pensioned by the Government, otherwise they could not live. Last summer there were but two men undergoing sentence for crime in Iceland, and they were serving a term of imprisonment for breaking into a storehouse and committing a larceny therein. There is no trial by jury. A man who committed a murder would be transported to Copenhagen for trial—all capital cases being tried there.

DIAMONDS.—The question of "diamonds falling from the skies" was investigated at the French Academy of Sciences under very peculiar circumstances. M. Daubree, the geologist, read a letter received from Mr. Nordenskjold, and in which the illustrious Swede described experiments tried on meteoric iron, which was found to contain a certain quantity of diamonds, and which could not be worked into any tool by the best Stockholm blacksmith. This circumstance reminded the learned perpetual secretary of a story narrated by Avicenna about Mahmoud, the Gaznead, the Mussulman conqueror of India. A large lump of iron having fallen from the heavens, it was decided to present to the Prince a sword made out of it. According to the Eastern nations, the arm should have been possessed of secret virtue. Unfortunately, it was impossible to work it, very likely because some diamonds were included in the meteoric mass.

FORBEARANCE.

BY J. R.

Nay! let it pass!
'Twas but a hasty words,
Unthinking uttered as unwilling heard—
Although upon my ear it strangely jarred,
A lifelong friendship shall not thus be marred;
Nay! let it pass!

Nay! let it pass!
I will not answer so,
Lest words on words to greater diff'rence grow;
Unguarded moments come to all—to me
Oft needs the trust of loving charity;
Then let it pass!

Then let it pass,
And not a thought remain
To pain my heart or give another's pain;
Let hearts be true, and let the friendship end
That bears not with the failings of a friend.
Yes! let it pass!

LED ON BY FATE.

BY T. M. S.

CHAPTER I.

THE ball was over, the guests had departed, and Arabella Alsworth was alone in her dressing-room. It was a handsome and luxuriously furnished apartment, and the bright fire that burned in the grate made it look cosy and comfortable. She was standing with her elbow resting on the mantel-piece, looking in anything but a pleasant humor. She was surrounded by all the comforts and luxuries which wealth could purchase or the heart wish for; and these, and the floods of adulation and flattery which had been poured upon her that night, ought to have made her happy; but it did not, and there was a shade on her fair face which told a very different tale.

She was tall and graceful, with a splendid contour of both face and figure. She stood there with her masses of golden brown hair drawn back from her broad white forehead; her calm blue eyes, so deep and clear, fixed vacantly on the bright coals in the grate, while her tender mouth seemed to tremble with strong emotion.

The poor girl was looking back into the past, to another night and another ball, when she and Frank Wallis, a young naval Lieutenant, had left the heated room and strolled into the conservatory. How well she remembered the calm beauties of that never to be forgotten scene! The blue heaven above, with its myriads of stars; the hushed murmur of the soft west wind as it rustled among the leaves; the musical plash of the fountain, and the soft harmony of the music from the ballroom. It all came back to her like a dream.

Up to that time she had known nothing of the joys and miseries of love. She was happy. The present was all in all. It was only when the time had come for Frank to join his ship that the light broke in upon their hearts, and the warm tide of passion swept the veil from their eyes. There, in the soft morning twilight, under those bright stars, which had so often listened to lovers' vows, they plighted their troth, and the hearts which Nature had linked together were bound the one to the other by the most solemn promises of love and loyalty.

Like an honest man, the young Lieutenant had immediately gone to Mr. Alsworth and laid the case before him. But he only laughed and pooh-poohed the idea. They were children, and, as he was only a penniless Lieutenant, if they got married how were they to live? This was a question the gallant young gentleman was not prepared to answer, and, as the old gentleman imagined, went away with a flea in his ear. But Arabella was of opinion that she ought to have a voice in the matter; and when she was told by her father, with a considerable amount of glee, how he had posed the Lieutenant with the financial question, she astonished him by exclaiming:

"Oh! you mean old pappy, how could you be so cruel? Just as if you had not got enough for all of us!"

It was while she was recalling all this, lost in a deep but not altogether unpleasant reverie, that the door opened, and Miss Mortimer, Arabella's aunt, a maiden lady who, since the death of the late Mrs. Alsworth, had presided over the domestic arrangements of Netley Lodge, entered the room. "What! not undressed, Bella!" she exclaimed.

"No," was the reply; "I was thinking and meditating."

"And what was the subject of your meditations?"

"I was thinking what a nuisance it is to be rich!"

"Gracious, child! you must be mad!"

"No. If I were not supposed to be a rich heiress, I should not be pestered, as I am now, with offers of marriage by men I don't care a fig for. It would be more bearable if I could fancy it was I who am the attraction, and not papa's money."

"My dear Bella!" exclaimed Miss Mortimer, "you make a great mistake. How is it possible that any one should fail to love you for yourself? Are you not young, beautiful, and clever?"

"But how am I to know that? You see, papa is rich—that is the cause of all my trouble!"

"Foolish child! How can riches be productive of unhappiness?"

"In my case it is easily explained. Papa wants me to marry men without my loving them, and I want to marry the man I love. If papa were poor, I should be allowed to choose for myself."

"Perhaps," said Miss Mortimer, in a slightly sarcastic tone, "if you were really the daughter of a poor man, you might not get married at all; people cannot live on love!"

"No, I suppose not," replied Arabella; "but in that case there could be no base motive to inspire love. If I were poor, I should not be less handsome or less clever; and yet, as you very well know, I should not have have half the lovers I now have. Perhaps, like that poor Miss Pilkington, the governess, who is certainly as good-looking and clever as I am, none at all."

"Well, my dear, I'm sure I don't know what is to be done for you, unless, indeed, your papa were to speculate in railways or something of that sort and lose all his money."

"I'm not quite sure that I should like that," said Arabella musingly; "but it has given me an idea. What I should like would be to pretend that papa had lost all his money, then we should soon see who were our real friends, and who were the worshippers of mammon."

"My dear Bella! I'm surprised at you—you who pretend to be such a lover of truth. Don't you see that would be deceiving people? It would be untrue."

"Now, aunty," cried Arabella, "that's unkind! Why, when I remonstrated with you because you told James to tell the Miss Scudamores you were not at home, when you were, you said that it was only a white lie, and that white lies were permissible in polite society."

"But I did not tell the lie myself; I only instructed James. It's a sort of polite fiction we all understand."

"Just so. You don't like to tell the lies yourself; but you compel your servant to do so. How funny you would look if the next time you instructed James to say you were not at home, he were to turn round and say, "Beg pardon, ma'am, but that's a lie, and I can't tell it."

"Dear, dear child, what a fuss you are making about nothing!"

"Nay, nay, aunty; the boot is on the other foot. I merely suggested that it would be good fun to pretend I was afraid that papa had been speculating, and so forth. For instance, if I were to give the smallest hint to the Miss Scudamores, you would soon see how they'd set the ball rolling, and how, like the snowball, it would gain in size and force as it circulated."

Miss Mortimer shook her head. "Suppose it came to papa's ears, what would he say?"

"Oh! if it did, I could soon put that right."

"Dear, dear child, I wish you had not told me. The very idea of such a thing!"

"Yes, the idea's a splendid one. I'll hint that we shall be obliged to retrench; and I'll persuade papa to take us to Paris, and then I can be ill, or something, and we'll go to the south of France. That's it; that will do beautifully!"

"Bless me! bless me!" cried Miss Mortimer, "what a girl you are!"

"Yes, that's lovely!—And now, aunty, go to bed and sleep on it."

Miss Mortimer did as Arabella bade her; most people did. The thought even of pretending to be poor was distasteful to her; but Paris and the south of France made a deep impression on her; and in the end, as far as she was concerned, there seemed a fair chance of Arabella's having her way, that is, provided she was in the same mind when she awoke the next morning.

With such a grand scheme in her head, it will not be any matter of surprise that she did not sleep well, and that when she did, she dreamed that she had sent all her lovers to the rightabout, and a number of other strange and wonderful things.

Of course it was very late when the two awoke, and consequently it was past twelve before they had finished their breakfast. At this point the two Miss Scudamores were seen coming along the drive; and a few minutes afterwards the door-bell rang and they were ushered into the drawing-room.

"There now, aunty," exclaimed Arabella, "you see everything seems to favor us. Papa is gone off to London, and here are our advertising mediums ready to publish anything we may supply them with." And with this she started off to the drawing-room.

"My dearest creature!" exclaimed the elder visitor, rushing and kissing Arabella, "what has made you so late? It's nearly one o'clock. We called about eleven, but you were not up."

"I'm really very sorry," replied Arabella; "but it was late when we got to bed, and I did not get a wink of sleep till after daylight."

"Poor darling!" cried both ladies in a breath; and then Aunt Betsy made her appearance. "Have you heard the news?" cried both sisters at once.

"No; what is it?" exclaimed Miss Mortimer, who was not at all averse to a bit of scandal.

"And you really have not heard of it? You who know the family so well!" replied Miss Scudamore, who delighted to play with her auditors. 'Can't you guess?

"No; how can I?" exclaimed Arabella.

"Well, then, as I see you are wild to know, I'll tell you! There's a full account of it in the newspaper. Blankhorn's Bank has gone all to smash!"

"Dear, dear! I'm so sorry. Blankhorn's Bank failed! Surely the world must be coming to an end!" moaned Miss Mortimer.

"I hope you will not be a—be a loser?" queried Miss Scudamore.

"Not to a great extent. I'm exceeding sorry, more for the family than for myself."

"So am I," answered Arabella gravely. "I do hope papa is not compromised in their affairs!"

"Well, I hope things will not turn out so badly as you seem to think," remarked Miss Mortimer. "It does not do to make light of other people's misfortunes, for one never can make sure of not getting into a mess one's self. I remember once having some shares in a concern, only five twenties, producing about fourteen or fifteen pounds a year, clear of income tax; and do you know that for the sake of that paltry sum I was liable to have lost my whole fortune, every penny! Lucky for me, the shares got up to a big premium, and Mr. Alsworth advised me to sell out. Three or four months afterwards, the concern burst up, and the directors were sent to prison."

"It's really very serious," said the younger Miss Scudamore. "I read the leader in the Times yesterday, and it said the trade of the country was under a cloud."

"Yes," chimed in Arabella; "and when it bursts, it will deal ruin and destruction on all sides."

"Bless me!" cried the elder visitor, "I did not see that! Do you think it can be true?"

"Certainly," exclaimed Arabella, in surprise. "Why, it's printed in the newspaper!"

"But all is not true that is printed in the newspaper," observed Miss Scudamore.

"Not in the penny newspaper," said Miss Mortimer; "but in the Times it is different. I've often heard Mr. Alworth say that he would pin his faith on what the Times says."

"I suppose," put in Arabella, you would not believe it if you saw my father's name in the list of bankrupts?"

"Your papa! Certainly not! Impossible!" cried both ladies in a breath. "But of course, dear Miss Alsworth, you are only joking?" continued Miss Scudamore.

"No; I'm not," returned Arabella. "I assure you I am very uneasy about papa. I know he has been speculating a good deal lately, and in these days fortunes are soon lost!"

"But, my dear, your papa is so immensely rich!" said little Miss Prudence; "it would take a lot to break him."

"Ah!" sighed the young hostess, "I see you do not believe me; but when you see a great black board erected on the lawn, announcing that this elegant mansion and grounds are to be let furnished for a term of years, you will understand that what I am now saying is no joke."

By this time the two visitors were getting very uneasy. They were anxious to be off to propagate the astounding facts they had just been made acquainted with; so they said good-bye and hurried off.

"I think you've done it now," said Miss Mortimer, when the two visitors had departed; "but if it should get to papa's ears, what will he say?"

"I'm sure I don't care," replied Arabella. "I said nothing of a positive character. It's as good as a play."

CHAPTER II.

THE cloud which had hung over the commercial world had burst, and, as Arabella had unconsciously prophesied, had dealt ruin and destruction on all sides. The great firm of Overend, Gurney, and Company had collapsed, with liabilities amounting to more than ten millions. The day following "Black Friday," the crisis became more intense, and failures and stoppages of payment were announced on all sides.

Mr. Alsworth, who had been reading the Times, suddenly put it down and rang the bell.

"Bring me my overcoat and hat, James," he said to the footman who had entered the room. "I want to catch the 10.20 train." When the man had brushed his hat and helped him on with his coat, he said, "Tell Miss Mortimer I shall be back to dinner;" and he hurried off.

"Do you know where your master is going?" asked Arabella, who had seen her father hurrying down the drive.

"No, miss; but I suppose he's off to London," the man replied.

"Aunty," said she, when she had returned to the morning-room, "papa's gone to London again. What can he want to be always going there for?"

"Impossible to say, dear; about this horrible money business. I wish he'd done as I did, and invested all his capital in consols; you get less interest, but then you have no worry as to its safety."

"I'm sure I wish this dreadful crisis would come to an end. Papa looks quite ill with all this excitement and anxiety."

* * * * * *

"Dear me! What can it be? Such a crowd!" cried Miss Prudence, who was standing at the window.

Miss Scudamore rushed to see what it was. "It's an accident or something," she suggested. "And there! That's a body on the stretcher. Who can it be?" Then she rang the bell, and a smart little servant-maid made her appearance. "What is the matter, Jane?" she asked.

"Nothing as I knows of, ma'am," she answered.

"There's a body just been taken past. Go and ask some one who it is."

Jane went to the door; and when she came back she was as white as a sheet. "Oh! ma'am, its dreadful! Why, I saw him go past this morning, and he looked as well as ever!"

"But who is it, girl? Can't you tell me?" cried Miss Prudence angrily.

"Mr. Alsworth, ma'am!" replied Jane with a gasp.

"Mr. Alsworth!" iterated Miss Scudamore in mingled tones of astonishment and incredulity.

"Yes, ma'am. They say he's had a fit."

"Good gracious! how dreadful!" said Miss Prudence, as the two sisters stood staring at one another in blank astonishment.

"I can't believe it! It can't be true!" at length exclaimed Miss Scudamore. It's seems impossible!"

* * * * * *

If, in the midst of a bright summer day, a thunderbolt had fallen at the feet of Arabella Alsworth and her aunt, or a volcano had suddenly sprung up in the middle of the lawn and belched forth fire and lava, they could not have been more startled and alarmed than when they saw the policemen open the gate and slowly approach the hall door, bearing a body on a stretcher. They stood at the window, apparently spellbound. The men put down their burden, and one of them ascended the steps and rang the bell. The hall door was opened, and the body on the stretcher was admitted.

"What can it mean, aunty?" asked Arabella.

"Death, my dear," she replied.

"But who can it be? Not papa, surely?" she said in tones of horror.

"Who else can they be bringing here?" asked the aunt.

The girl's cheeks blanched with horror, and she threw herself into her aunt's arms and burst into a flood of tears.

At this moment, Mr. Fitch, the family family, came blustering up the drive, and was about to be taken up stairs, when Ara-

bella darted into the hall and accosted him. "Oh, doctor! what does it all mean? Is he dead?" she asked tremulously.

"Dead! Oh dear, no; I hope not," he replied.

"How did it happen?"

"I don't know any more than you do. All I know is that your father was found in a railway carriage in a state of insensibility;" and so saying, he sprang up-stairs to attend to his patient. He found him much worse than he had anticipated. He bled him, and applied all the remedies usual in such cases; and for the present they seemed to remove the more alarming symptoms; but he freely confessed that he thought the case a bad one, and suggested that a London physician should be sent for.

"I can give no positive opinion," he went on to say; "one can never tell what turn these disorders may take; but I think, or rather I hope, he will pull through."

The London physican came the next morning, and the opinion he gave only confirmed that given by Mr. Fitch. The delirium had considerably increased, and was of the worst and most alarming kind, which, the doctors said, too often, if it did not issue in death, left the brain so much disordered and weakened as to impair its functions for the rest of life. The most undivided attention was required to keep the patient quiet, and to apply the remedies necessary for cooling and tranquillising the brain.

It was at this point that the cause of Mr. Alsworth's sudden attack was discovered. He had as usual been reading the Times, and had come across a paragraph headed "Absconding of a well-known Stockbroker—Enormous Defalcations." It stated that "much excitement and consternation had been experienced on 'Change in consequence of its being reported that several large cheques drawn by Mr. Archibald Sinclair, the well-known stockbroker, had been returned marked "No effects." It was at the same time ascertained that his offices were closed, and he himself had disappeared."

This was the man who had sold Mr. Alsworth's bank share; and when he had read this, as we have already seen, he rang for his hat and coat and made his way at once to the railway station, caught the ten-twenty train, and proceeded at once to London. He went straight to his bankers, but only to find that Mr. Sinclair's cheque for twenty-seven thousand pounds had been dishonored, and that the drawer had decamped with the money.

The whole thing had been a great shock to Mr. Alsworth; and this, and the excitement in consequence of his loss, brought on a fit of apoplexy, which it seemed would probably result in his death.

When Arabella discovered, from a letter written by her father's lawyer, the loss of this large sum, she was dismayed beyond measure. It seemed to her utter ruin. She had no idea of the amount of her father's fortune; but twenty-seven thousand pounds, besides other losses, which he had previously spoken of, must, she thought, reduce them to the verge of poverty. It was true there was no immediate want of money, for in her father's escritoire she found a matter of two hundred pounds or more in notes and gold. It was the future she thought most of.

There was one idea which would protrude itself into her mind—it was, that this was a judgment sent to punish her for her levity in setting on a foot a false report of her father's losses. But, amid all her crosses and trials, there was one thought that was to her a consolation and a joy—it was that she had one, true and loving, on whom she could depend, and in whom she could trust. Come what might, she knew that her sailor-lover would not desert her; but he was away in a far-off African station, and could be of no assistance to her in her present strait. Her aunt was no woman of business, and, except in the household arrangements, was quite useless.

She had no friend to whom she could apply for advice or assistance but her uncle, and he lived in Devonshire, just the opposite extreme of the kingdom; so that though she had written to him the day following her father's attack, she did not expect to see him for a couple of days at least.

It was the third day after her father's attack, and Mr. Fitch's report that morning had been anything but favorable. She was sitting by the window indulging in a reverie, when the footman entered the room and said: "Oh miss, Mrs. Simson thinks master's worse."

"I will come to him directly," cried Arabella, much alarmed; "and, James, you may as well go and see if you can find Mr. Fitch and bring him here at once."

She hastened to her father's room, and went to his bedside, and sat down to await the arrival of the surgeon, who was not long in making his appearance.

Mr. Alsworth was totally oblivious of all round him—talking wildly and incoherently, and insisting that he must start for London at once, as, without his aid, they would never catch that rascal Sinclair. All attempts to soothe and pacify him were vain. His delirium was such, that it was plain all real communication between his mind and that of any other person was at end. Now and again he opened his eyes and stared about him in a vacant manner. It was a dreadful spectacle, for it was evident that he recognized no one, not even his daughter.

Mr. Fitch shook his head. He directed that all that could possibly be done to tranquillize the pain should be done, but he gave no opinion. All that he said was: "He has a very strong constitution, and he's under sixty, so that there is a chance for him yet."

So the day passed, and night wore on. It was rough and stormy; the wind howled in the chimney, and the rain pattered against the window.

The delirious ravings had ceased, and the patient lay still and quiet; occasionally the eyes opened with a vacant stare, and then closed again. From this comatose state he never awkoned; and so the spirit passed away.

CHAPTER III.

IT was the the day following her father's death. Arabella and her aunt were sitting in the drawing-room, waiting the arrival of her uncle. Presently the hall bell rang; there was a bustle on the stairs, and then the door was flung open and the footman announced "Major Bowyer!"

Most people thought the Major a genial, kind-hearted man. He was of commanding presence, tall, and remarkably handsome; had a fine figure, fine features, and a florid complexion. These, with his debonair manner and a soft melodious voice, made him a general favorite in society, especially with the fair sex. He entered the room with a cheerful salutation to both his sister-in-law and niece, and though he put on a pleasant smile, he in reality was not in the best of humors. On his way down in the train the death of Mr. Alsworth had been a topic of conversation; and his first impression was that, as he knew that the deceased had appointed him sole executor and trustee, his position would not be an unpleasant one. Arabella was a handsome girl, and to have such a fine young creature under his control for the next two years at least, and also to have the management of her property, was not at all disagreeable. But presently something was said about large losses and consequent embarrassment, and, then things assumed an entirely different aspect. The idea of having his niece dependent on him, instead of his having the command of her thousands, was a state of things he had never contemplated; and consequently, when he arrived at Netley Lodge, his temper was somewhat ruffled. But he was too politic a man to let either Arabella or Miss Mortimer know his thoughts; so he smiled graciously on the former, and kissed her affectionately; and then approaching the latter, he said: "Well, Betsy, how do you do?" and stretching out his hand indifferently, he continued: "Glad to see you looking so well."

Miss Mortimer and the Major had never been on particularly friendly terms; but, in her present position, she was very glad that Arabella should have some one to help and advise her more competent than herself; so she replied: "Thank you, Robert. Thank you very much for coming. In this melancholy business, you will be a great help to my poor Bella."

"Certainly, certainly! I shall do all I can," he replied airily. "But what is this I heard in the train about losses and embarrassment?"

Arabella shook her head. "We are almost as much in the dark as you are, my dear uncle," she said. "All we know for certain is that papa's stockbroker has absconded, taking with him twenty-seven thousand pounds of his money."

"What! That rascal Sinclair?"

"Yes."

"But surely the loss of twenty-seven thousand pounds would not mean ruin. Can't you tell me anything more?"

"No; I have written to Mr. Ainsley—that's papa's lawyer—and informed him of the sad event; and he replied that, if I would let him know the day appointed for the funeral, he would come down and bring the will and the papers with him. I don't know much about it; but I thought from the tone of the letter that things might turn out better than we expected."

"I hope and trust, for your sake, my dear, that they may.—But now, what about dinner?"

"We dine at six," she replied; "and"—looking at her watch—"it is now half-past five."

"Well, then, I'll go and dress. I suppose they have taken my luggage up." And, to Miss Mortimer's inexpressible relief, he rose and left the room, accompanied by Arabella, who volunteered to show him to his apartments.

"What a wretched, cold-hearted creature!" murmured the soft-hearted lady. "Not a word of sympathy or comfort to the poor child, nothing but money."

The dinner was over; the ladies had retired, and Major Bowyer was sitting by the fire sipping some of Mr. Alsworth's choicest Burgundy, and he felt quite comfortable and quite at his ease. The ill-humor with which he had entered the house, the natural result of bad news and a journey on a winter's day, had yielded to the agreeable influence of the house. He was, too, greatly pleased with his niece. Even if the state of affairs turned out as everybody seemed to imagine they would, he was beginning to think that to have so fine and graceful a girl as a member of his establishment would be no such unpleasant thing, and certainly would, as an attraction, be worth the expense. So he sat on, smoking and thinking till the Burgundy was finished, and at an early hour went to bed.

The days passed slowly. From the time Major Bowyer entered the house, he, as it were, took command of everything, much to Arabella's satisfaction. Miss Mortimer, however, was not so well pleased. She knew more of her brother-in-law's character than her niece, and had a vivid recollection of what her dead sister had suffered under his despotic rule.

At last the day of the funeral arrived. Arabella had taken a last look at the placid face of her dear dead father; the coffin had been screwed down; and now the sombre procession was slowly wending its way down the drive. The poor orphan was sitting bathed in tears. She had seen the last of him she had loved so dearly, and who had loved her with an equal if not a stronger passion, and she felt sad and desolate. Presently other thoughts crept into her mind and occupied her brain. She was looking back into the past and musing on the future. Was the happy life she had led to be a thing of the past? Had the sunshine of her life faded and passed away for ever? She sat for some time silent and discouraged, how long she never knew, and then she and Miss Mortimer were summoned to the library to hear the will read. Her uncle met her at the door and conducted her to a seat, and the reading commenced.

CHAPTER IV.

IN THEIR own estimation, the Misses Scudamore were not, as some of the inhabitants of Nunsford imagined, selfish, stingy, and narrow-minded; on the contrary, taken at their own appraisement, they were just the reverse, being large-hearted, benevolent, and charitable. It was true that if they distributed tickets for bread and coals, these indispensable commodities were invariably paid for with other people's money. Again, when they had a piece of news, they did not keep it to themselves, but took the earliest opportunity of disseminating it as broadly as possible. There was no newspaper published in Nunsford, and consequently, if the Misses Scudamore had not taken upon themselves the office of "newsvendor," nobody would have known anything about anybody's business but their own. If, therefore, the Misses Scudamore looked upon themselves as benefactors to society generally, it is not much to be wondered at.

"There now, Prudence!" said Miss Scudamore; "that's no idle delusion, that's an undoubted fact."

"Of course it is," replied Prudence, "and I could take my oath to it before a whole bench of magistrates."

"We'll call in at Mrs. Montressor's as we go along and her the news. I should think we shall be the first, as the workmen had only just finished when we passed," said the elder lady.

About ten minutes afterwards they were ushered into Mrs. Montressor's morning-room, where they found Miss Puddicombe; and after the usual salutations, Miss Scudamore commenced:

"You've not seen it, of course—it's only just been put up."

"Seen what?" asked Mrs. Montressor.

"The board."

"What board?"

"The one I told you about—don't you remember?"

"No," she replied, rather techily.

"Well, then, I'll tell you. It's on the lawn at Netley Lodge, and it informs the public that the eligible mansion is to be let."

"Indeed! But I'm not surprised," said Mrs. Montressor. "After what the poor old man said to me, that is what might have been expected."

"What did he say?" asked Miss Prudence anxiously.

"He said the state of things was appalling, that men who yesterday thought themselves rich, see ruin and bankruptcy staring them in the face. Meaning, of course, that he was one of them."

"Ruin and bankruptcy!" cried Miss Scudamore. "I had no idea it was so bad as that. No wonder the funeral was a shabby one—no mutes, no feathers, no anything!"

"Ah! I'm really sorry!" sighed Miss Puddicombe; "they were such nice people, especially Arabella."

"Do you really think so?" sneered Mrs. Montressor, "I don't. I always thought she was a horrid stuck-up thing, and that the talk about the number of her admirers was all bosh."

"Talking about admirers," put in Miss Puddicombe, "have you heard that Mrs. Wallis' son is coming home invalided? They say he went up a river in Africa to release some slaves. He led the party, and behaved most gallantly; and it is expected that he will get his promotion."

At that moment there came a loud knock at the door, and a moment afterwards Miss Nugent entered, with a newspaper in her hand. "It's abominable! I never was so deceived in my life!" she exclaimed, as soon as she had shaken hands with Mrs. Montressor and Miss Puddicombe.

"What is the matter?" asked Miss Scudamore.

"It's that Bella Alsworth. It's a trick. Read this!" and placing her finger on a paragraph, she handed the paper to Miss Puddicombe.

The kind old lady drew her spectacles from her pocket and wiped them deliberately, adjusted them carefully, spread out the newspaper, and read as follows: "The Will of Mr. Alsworth, of Nunsford.—The will (dated May 9th, 1857) of George Beddington Alsworth, who died Dec. 17th, was proved at Doctors' Commons on Jan. 23d, by Robert Alexander Bowyer, the sole executor and trustee; and the value of the personal estate was sworn to be under £128,000, the bulk of which is left to his daughter, together with Netley Lodge and all his other house and landed property."

"Why, then," cried Miss Scudamore, "she is, after all, an heiress!"

"Dear, dear," sighed Miss Puddicombe, "what a good job!"

"Good job!" blurted Mrs. Montressor; "I think it's scandalous!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

TORTURING-MACHINES.—The Judges at an Indiana race track, says a recent Chicago paper, have caught a jockey using electric spurs on his mount. The little miscreant had a belt of cells strapped under his jacket, and from these wires ran down his legs, connecting with the spurs. When he touched the flanks of his horse the unhappy beast experienced a thrill of agony which sent it into the air.

There was no rule at the track covering such barbarism, but the judges at once "did themselves proud" by passing the following:

"No jockey shall use anything on his mount but whip and spurs, and anyone found using an electric battery or similar contrivance shall be promptly ruled off the track. This rule shall apply to owners or other instigating or assisting jockeys to use such contrivances."

The last clause of this rule is the best. It is not the jockey who is primarily responsible, but the inhuman owners. There is enough, adds the writer, to discredit the sport already without electric torturing-machines.

WHICH SIDE TO SLEEP ON.—"Which side should I sleep on, doctor?" he inquired.

"In winter or summer?" asked the doctor, rubbing his chin thoughtfully.

"What's that to do with it?" exclaimed the patient half angrily.

"A great deal," responded the doctor, mysteriously.

"I don't see it."

"Of course you don't," said the imperturbable; "if you did you wouldn't be here asking me questions about it."

"Go ahead then," said the patient, sitting back resignedly.

"Well," continued the doctor, "in winter, when it is cold you should sleep on the inside, but in such weather as this you should sleep on the outside, in a hammock, with a draught all around it and a piece of ice for a pillow. Two dollars, please."

DYEING THE BURGLARS.—A German paper tells of a certain dyer at Koslin, who was awakened in the night not long ago by some burglars who were robbing his establishment, and were just ready to get away with a large bundle of valuable dye-stuffs. He seized a gun and ran into the dyehouse, where he found two men, whom he compelled to jump into a large vat of indigo dye. By threatening to shoot he forced them to plunge under the liquid several times, when he opened the door and ordered them into the street. He did not notify the police, but he told the story next morning, and nobody had any trouble in identifying the burglars on sight. They are marked men at Koslin.

PATIENCE.

BY S. Y. W.

Be patient! Easy words to speak
While plenty fills the cup of life,
While health brings roses to the cheek,
And far removed are care and strife.

Be patient! when the suff'rer lies
Prostrate beneath some fell disease,
And longs, through torturing agonies,
Only for one short hour of ease.

Be patient! when the weary brain
Is racked with thought and anxious care,
And troubles in an endless train
Seem almost more than it can bear.

And still to hope and strive and wait
The due reward of fortune's kiss;
This is to almost conquer fate,
This is to learn what patience is.

Despair not! though the clouds are dark,
And storm and danger veil the sky;
Let faith and courage guide thy barque,
The storm will pass, the port is nigh.

Be patient, and the tide will turn,
Shadows will flee before the sun;
These are the hopes that live and burn
To light us till our work is done.

An Unsolved Mystery.

BY A. Y. R.

THE moonlight lay in vivid patches on the old house.

It was a long, low, red-brick structure, built in no particular style, and apparently in no particular reign. It was a jumble of different architecture. Here was a gable; there a turret; now a Norman gateway; here a Gothic one. It had been begun, added to, altered, pulled down, and built up again, till probably the old Norman arch which guarded the entrance to the grounds was the only bit of the original building left.

Norman, Gothic, Tudor, Queen Anne—all went to make up a very charming whole—a whole covered with creepers, and trailing roses, and starry jessamine. And in one of the quaint turret rooms of this odd building slept a girl.

It was a hot July night. The moon shone on the soft lawns and silvery fountain; then it crept up the stone steps to the terrace above, gay with the pale primrose which only opens its delicate petals to the wooing evening breeze; then on up the creeper covered walls till it reached a casement window flung wide open to admit the flower-scented air. There it seemed to pause and explore.

It flung floods of light across a quaintly furnished room, rich with many an antique treasure, and seemed to centre all its brilliance on a white draped bed at the further end. There lay a girl.

She was asleep. Her lips were half parted to catch the scented night wind; her long lashes swept a delicate rose-tinted cheek. The moon showed how beautiful she was.

Presently she stirred uneasily, and finally sat up, her long, dark hair streaming over snowy lace-trimmed draperies. She sat up with an intent expression on her face as though she were gazing at some object close at hand. But her eyes remained shut.

She became gradually more and more agitated, her hands were tightly clenched together, her face assumed a strange expression of fear, of anguish, of sadness.

Presently her eyes opened, but, only yet half awake, they gazed blankly out into the moonlit space. She seemed to be concentrating all her powers on one particular portion of the room.

Then she woke in reality, and the strained expression of anguish left her face, although the look of fear was still there.

"Again!" she said aloud. And she shuddered.

She had been gazing all through her sleep at a man's face. It was dark and pale, framed in masses of lustreless jet-black hair. It had a melancholy drooping mouth, and deep, dark, sombre eyes, as fathomless as mountain tarns on a sunless day.

It seemed close to her, and when she awoke and opened her eyes she thought for the moment that the dream face was real, that she had actually returned the strange, half passionate, half mocking gaze of those melancholy eyes.

For three weeks she had seen the face whenever she shut her eyes. And every night she awoke, her eyes unclosing in spite of themselves at the bidding of that magnetic look.

She rose hastily from her bed, and throwing a light shawl on, went to the window and leaned out. One hand was pressed to her breast; the wild beating of her heart threatened to suffocate her.

The garden, fair and smiling, cool and peaceful, met her view. The scent of the starry jessamine floated towards her. The serene gaze of the stars seemed to still the fevered pulses.

"I am haunted, haunted!" she murmured to herself once or twice.

Then she laid her head down on the ledge of the window and burst into tears, sobbing like a frightened child.

"I am afraid!" she sobbed half aloud. And this time the serene glance of the stars seemed to mock her, and the gentle wind stirring the trembling leaves sent "light horrors" through her pulses.

She rose and paced wildly up and down the room. Every corner of it was bright as day.

"I must tell him. I cannot bear it alone," she thought. "He may laugh at it if he likes; but it is killing me. I cannot go on like this. I shall go mad!"

Almost involuntarily she shut her eyes—and the face came back to her. It remained so long in its clear persistency that she could gaze on it at will—always the same—pale to ghastliness, with its sweep of black hair, and its unhappy, sombre eyes.

"Good Heaven! Who can it be?" she cried in anguish. "I have never seen any one like that before."

She sat down again trembling from head to foot.

"Can I be really going mad?" she thought with a shudder. "I have read of people being haunted like this. But why should I be? I was happy till it came—and now my life is one long terror."

With a sudden movement she sank down on her knees beside the window, her eyes raised in appeal to the purple depth of vault behind which her childish faith told her that God dwelt.

She prayed long and earnestly for freedom from the terrible curse which had fallen upon her; prayed with innocent trust in the great God who watched unceasingly in the star bespangled sky.

And as she prayed, the wooing wind kissed her cheek, the scent of the flowers came to her as in a dream, a deep sense of peace and rest crept over her—and there, still in the same position, a suppliant at the foot of God's throne, she fell asleep, and dreamed of the face no more.

* * * * * *

"Don't laugh at me, Edwin. I can't bear it."

"My dear Violet, I am not laughing at you; but you take the thing too seriously altogether. I only want to show you how morbid and fanciful you are."

"It is not fancy, Edwin. I see it every night as plainly as I see you."

"Yes, yes, dear," he answered soothingly, though secretly alarmed at the deep rootedness of her "fancy." "Of course you do, but heaps of people have vivid dreams."

"Not a dream like that. I tell you, Edwin, he wakes me every night by the power of his gaze."

"Violet, you are carrying this folly too far. You are indulging it, and the more you do that the stronger it will grow. You must not think about it, and then you will forget it."

She was silent for a moment. Then she said in a low voice:

"It has taken so strong a hold on me, Edwin, and made me so miserably terrified, that I have seriously thought of breaking off our engagement."

They were standing on the stone terrace watching the peacocks strutting to and fro below them, spreading their splendid tails and uttering harsh notes of pleasure at their own beauty. There was a rustic bench close by, and Edwin Armytage drew her gently to it.

"This has gone farther than I supposed, Violet," he said gravely, when they were seated, "and I must know more about it all. Forget that I am your lover, dear, and look upon me as a doctor only. When you have answered my question perhaps I may be able to give you something that will make these nightly terrors disappear like magic."

He drew her head down on to his shoulder, and she nestled to him with a sigh. It would be a relief to tell all her secret dread to Edwin.

"When did you first see the face, Violet?"

"About three weeks ago."

"By day or night?"

"In broad daylight. I had been sitting reading, and suddenly grew tired, and laid the book down. I shut my eyes for a moment and the outlines of the face appeared. I was fascinated into watching it grow complete, it was so life-like."

"You had not been asleep? You are sure of it?"

"Quite sure."

"What book had you been reading—anything calculated to give rise to the fancy?"

"It was a volume of Tennyson's. I am positive the book had nothing to do with it. Edwin, if I do not get rid of it it will kill me! I dread the night so horribly."

"We will get rid of it, never fear," he said cheerily. "What a nervous, excitable little woman it is! And so this is what has been making the pretty cheeks so pale and the pretty eyes so heavy. Why, in a week's time you will be laughing at yourself! It is just indigestion and nervousness, my dear Violet. I shall give you a sleeping draught to-night, and to-morrow your white-faced, black-haired friend will have disappeared."

He laughed lightly.

"So you were actually going to give me up for your dream hero," he said cheerfully. "That is not a strong proof of your constancy, is it?"

But she could not laugh just yet. She had unburdened herself of her secret, but she had not got rid of her strong impression of haunting terror.

"It is so real," she said.

For a moment, in the brilliant dancing sunlight, with her lover by her side and all the cheerful sounds and sights of daylight around her, her thoughts flew swiftly back to the moonlit room and the strange foreign face. She dared not shut her eyes for fear that she might see it again.

"Of course it seems real, Violet, but you must try and be sensible, you know. It really only requires a strong effort of will—and a little help on my part," said Dr. Edwin Armytage, taking out his pocket-book and scribbling a prescription on one of its leaves. "That is a sleeping draught that will mean death to your Byronic nightly visitor," he added, as he gave it to her. "Cheer up, Vi, he will not live much longer."

She took the paper and smiled faintly. She could not echo his cheerful words, or look lightly back at the vision which had so terrified her.

But she took the draught that night and slept a deep and dreamless sleep, haunted by no evil or terrifying visions. She had a faint bloom of color on her cheek when she met her lover the next day.

"So," he said, pinching her cheek, "we have made short work of him, I can see. Little goose, to be so easily frightened!"

Violet Lonsdale was her old self again that day, and went to bed without even a thought of her midnight visitor. Her last remembrance was of Edwin's smile and handclasp as he bade her good-bye.

But that night she saw the face again. Pale, stern, implacable as ever, gazing at her with burning, sombre eyes, which seemed to fasten themselves upon her very soul and compel its awakening. And she awoke, terrified as before.

This time she did not pray. She felt stupified, fascinated, helpless. It was as though a snake had fixed its eyes upon her and thrown her into a trance of dumb terror.

"He has been here again? Very persistent, I must say!" said Dr. Armytage with forced gaiety, as he came to pay his daily visit.

"Yes," said Violet in a crushed, lifeless voice. "It is no use, Edwin. And I have told papa. I am not going to marry you. I shall only grow worse, and, perhaps, even go mad."

"This is not like you, Violet. You are generally sensible."

"I cannot struggle any more," she answered dully.

He looked at her with a sudden pang. Her eyes were blank and hopeless, her cheeks hollow, her whole expression one of strained anguish. He recognized that the case was getting serious, and that strong measures must be taken at once. Her life, perhaps her reason, was at the mercy of this morbid hallucination. He bent over her and took her hand in his.

"Listen, Violet," he said firmly; "you have trust in me, have you not?"

"Yes; but you cannot help me here," she answered.

He controlled his impatience.

"I am going to alter your prescription, Violet," he said gently, "and order you something that will cure you. I swear it will cure you!" he cried with sudden passion.

She smiled listlessly.

"I will take whatever you like," she said, the blank look stealing over her eyes again.

"You are suffering from disordered nervous imagination," he said. "You must travel—see different people—undergo constant change of scene. It is essential for you. Do you understand me, Violet? This queer old house and the strange room you persist in sleeping in are having a bad effect upon you."

"How can I travel?" said Violet, showing faint interest for a moment. "Papa is too old, and I cannot go alone."

"You shall go with me. I will devote myself to you. Marry me at once, Violet, and I promise you you shall never be troubled again."

A blush spread over her cheek. The suddenness of the idea seemed to rouse her from her lethargy.

"Will you, Violet?" he urged. "I will do all I can to make you happy."

It was long before she would consent, but at last his reasoning and his pleading and his passion overcame her. And, absorbed in this new joy, in the trembling, blissful thoughts of the fulness of life that was to come, the dream face vanished, swallowed up in the reality of her happiness.

She saw it no more till the night before the wedding-day. Then it seemed to have a slow, mocking, triumphant look in the steady gaze of its burning, sombre eyes.

* * * * * *

"Are you not glad you took my advice, Violet, and came abroad with me instead of moping yourself to death in that dismal old house of yours?"

"Very glad," she answered with a little grateful smile.

"And are you happy, sweetest?"

"Almost too happy, dear. It is too good to last."

They were quiet, each full of silent love for the other. They had been abroad for eight months, and had not yet wearied of this protracted honeymoon. During the whole of that time, Violet's peace had not once been disturbed by the vision of that nightly visitor. She was almost disposed, looking back at her terror through a long, dim vista of happy, golden days, to laugh at it herself. But she had suffered too much to even care to think of it at all. It was past—it was gone.

They had wandered through Switzerland and France; they had made a leisurely tour through Germany, and now they were to finish up their long holiday with a glimpse of romantic Italy. Edwin had a fancy for seeing Rome and the Carnival.

A week later, and they stood at the window of their hotel, gazing out on the strange motley crowd, with their odd dresses, their painted faces—every eccentricity that human beings could devise finding a place in that curious throng. Violet and her husband stood side by side, laughing lightly at it all.

"What guys people can make of themselves!" she said. "I never could have believed it if I hadn't seen it with my very own eyes."

"You will have something to tell your poor old dad about when next you write home," he said, slipping his arm round her waist.

They stood silently for a moment looking at the strange scene. A painted cart was going slowly by, drawn by great sleek oxen with gaily gilded horns. They had wreaths of scented flowers flung round their soft necks; the inhabitants of the car were fantastically dressed in the garb of Neapolitan peasants, and they were nodding pasteboard donkeys' heads upon their shoulders. The effect was grotesque in the extreme.

"What should we say to all this folly and nonsense in sober England?" he asked, laughing.

She made no response, except by leaning heavily against him, and turned to look at her in some surprise. She was deadly white.

"Look!" she cried in a perfect frenzy of terror, pointing with her finger at the seething crowd below. "There it is again! The face! the face!"

He looked hastily in the direction where her finger pointed, but could distinguish nothing amid that moving mass of masks and faces.

He turned again to Violet to chide her vivid fancy. She had fainted.

In the midst of the multitude of moving beings, she had clearly distinguished the face of the man who had haunted her previously. It seemed to have sprung forth in all its pallid clearness, and to her the gay crowd melted away for a moment, leaving her face to face, soul to soul, with this man. His eager, burning, sombre eyes sprang to meet her gaze, and held her spirit in some magic spell.

When she recovered she found herself lying on the sofa with Edwin kneeling by

her side, and the scent of eau-de-cologne in the air.

"Are you better?" he asked her anxiously.

She did not answer for a moment. Then she made an attempt to struggle into a sitting posture. He gently prevented her.

"Lie still, dear," he said. "It was the heat of the room that made you faint."

He hoped for a moment that she had forgotten the cause of her illness.

"It was not the room," she said, speaking with some difficulty, a tense expression of horror dilating her dark eyes. "It was the face again! Oh, Edwin, I thought I was free, and now—now I have actually seen him! I am so frightened!" She began to sob convulsively. "Just as I have seen him always—so pale and terrible, and his eyes!"—She shuddered. "How soon can we get away from here, Edwin?" she asked.

"Dearest Violet, you are not strong enough to go just yet. When you are better we will start for home. But you must not think you have seen the reality of your dream, that would be too absurd. It was just a little return of your old trouble, and it will go as easily as it did before."

"Ah, you don't understand," cried Violet despairingly. "Oh, I dare not stay here—in the same town with him! When I am better? I am better now, Edwin—I shall always be strong enough to get away from that. See!"

She struggled off the sofa, and made a few uncertain steps in the direction of the door, laughing weakly. As he caught her in his arms she fainted again. This time he carried her to bed and gave her a sleeping draught. When he saw her breathing lightly and regularly he returned to the sitting-room with a puzzled brow.

Was it only her vivid fancy, that amongst the crowd of grotesque faces she should recognise that mystic dream face that had haunted her so long—or had she seen some one who really resembled the vision? He could not tell, but he was uneasy at this return of his wife's hallucination. He fancied that he had battled with and slain it, and here it was rising its Medusa-like head again!

"Never mind," he thought patiently to himself; "love conquered it before, and love shall conquer it again. Violet has very highly-strung nerves."

An hour later, when he came back from another visit to his wife's bedside, he found a telegram for him. It was to announce the death of his father, and urge his immediate presence in England.

He threw the telegram down, half stunned with the news, and the complications that might follow it. He must go to his mother at once. He was the only son and there were many things to be seen to. But what about Violet? He decided to tell her when she awoke. It was too late to start that day.

She awoke extremely weak, but calmer and more cheerful, and he deemed it prudent to break the news at once. The distressed look came over her face again.

"Must you go, Edwin?"

"Dearest, it is absolutely necessary. There is no way out of it. I only wish you were strong enough to come with me."

She clung to him terrified.

"You cannot mean to leave me, Edwin? In a strange place and alone."

"I can be there and back in four days, Violet. Four days is a very short time, and you will be quite safe. Nobody will run away with you, and I will ask the Markhams to come and see you often."

The Markhams were an English family who lived a short way off.

But Violet was not to be consoled.

"I shall die of terror, Edwin. You must let me come too."

"My own darling, you must be reasonable. How can you endure the hurry and bustle of rapid traveling when you are as weak and upset as this? A house of death would be the worst place possible to take you to. I could not think of it. You must be guided by me, Violet. I thought you would be more sensible."

He did not speak harshly, but his mind was too occupied with the thought of his father's death and his journey to England for him to be quite as tender and considerate as usual. And she needed it more.

She was resigned at last, and after saying that she should not put her foot outside the hotel till he came back, and that she should be abjectly miserable and horribly frightened, she allowed him to depart. It is true she clung to him with passionate tenderness when they said good-bye, but she made no scene, nor did she shed a single tear.

After all, four days are not an eternity!

The landlord smiled slightly as he saw the farewell, and heard Edwin's recommendation of perfect quiet.

"These English are jealous husbands," he thought to himself, "but then they sometimes love their wives! The signora is very pretty. It is to be hoped she is always discreet."

* * * * * *

Violet had determined to bear her husband's departure well, and she did so. It is true she was a little pale and heavy-eyed and refused to leave the hotel to join any of the Markhams' pleasure-parties; but then what is more natural than that a young wife shall look distressed when her husband leaves her, and when her father-in-law has just died? The Markhams found such grief very proper and quite interesting. They went to see Violet once a day, and found her more cheerful each time. Every day brought her nearer to her beloved Edwin.

On the night he was to return she decked the room with flowers—great bowls of pale primroses and violets, her sweet namesakes—till it looked like a bower of blossoms. She paused at last, with her hands full of the scented petals, tired out.

The door softly opened and shut. She looked round—she had heard the approaching footsteps—and—behold! She was face to face with the man of her dream.

She sank back, the flowers still in her hand.

The burning eyes fastened themselves upon her face.

* * * * * *

An hour afterwards Edwin Armytage entered the hotel. It struck him once that the landlord and the waiters looked at him rather curiously; but he passed them by and ran lightly up the stairs to their sitting-room. Some undefined and awful dread seized upon his soul as he saw that the room was empty. The carpet had quite a little track of tinted petals on it, the room was full of the sweet floral decorations. He took in with a pang the loving care she had spent in arranging this welcome for him.

He opened the door of their bedroom, expecting to find her there, with love shining from her sweet eyes. It was also empty!

Then he rushed like a madman down the stairs, and seized upon the landlord; the mark of his fingers on the latter's arm as he clutched it in the extremity of his anguish did not disappear for a week.

"Where is my wife?" he demanded hoarsely.

The landlord retreated a little before those feverish eyes.

"The signora went out half an hour ago, signor," he answered discreetly.

"Went out? With whom?"

There was a little crowd round them by this time, but Edwin did not heed their curious gaze.

"The signora went out with—with a gentleman," said Seneca, hesitating out of pure pity for this injured husband. "She may return soon," he added soothingly.

He knew the Englishman when roused might be dangerous, and he had no wish to have tragedies enacted in his splendid hotel.

Edwin did not speak, but something in his eyes impelled Seneca to hurriedly tell him all he knew.

He was sorry for the loving husband whose wife had run off with another man!

"Signor, half an hour ago, a plain black carriage with two black horses drew up at the door. A gentleman sprang out, and went straight up the stairs to the signora's apartments. He seemed to know his way quite well," said Seneca, with a glance at Edwin to see how he was taking this, "and asked for no directions. Signor, in a few minutes the signora descended the staircase on his arm. She was closely veiled, and walked with difficulty. It seemed to me that she was pale and weeping. But she went of her own free will, and it was no business of mine to interfere. They entered the carriage, signor, and were driven rapidly away. I do not know in which direction."

Edwin's white lips had only one more despairing question to ask. He knew what the answer to it would be.

"What was he like?"

"Signor, he was tall and distinguished, with a pale face and strange, burning eyes. It would appear that no one in the hotel recognized him."

Edwin pushed the man aside and dashed out into the street.

"His wife has been unfaithful to him," said the landlord, with a little explanatory shrug of his shoulders to the bystanders. "These English are mad where they love. He will put a bullet through his brain. And the signora looked so sweetly innocent. Who would have thought it?"

* * * * * *

To-day, thirty years after the strange event took place of which I have written, there wanders over the surface of the earth a man with snow-white hair and restless, searching eyes. He has spent his life, his health, his fortune, in traveling from one place to another, ever seeking for what he will never find.

It is Edwin Armytage, and he is looking for the lost bride of his happy youth. But he will never find her. He is also looking for a man with a white face, black, lustreless hair, and burning, sombre eyes.

But he has never found him either, nor will he ever, for the mystery remains unsolved until this day, and the white-haired, restless man must find peace soon in the bosom of the quiet earth, wherein we all must sleep some day.

Only it is his prayer that he may find his Violet first.

A House-Mistress.—Most young wives desire to have a home of their own: and though the mother is loath to lose her darling, she cannot deny her the privilege of following her mate, as the mother did before her, it is considered an undesirable thing by most mothers to have a house full of "old maids." But it is a fact, in spite of this feeling, that many mothers do not prepare their daughters for happy marriages. They neglect to teach them the commonest duties of a housekeeper, under the mistaken idea, which they hold, of love and tenderness, that they do not want their daughters to have so hard a life as they have. But if they are not properly educated, their lot will be even harder.

Besides having a knowledge of cookery, the young woman needs to know how to fashion and make garments for ordinary wear, for we rarely find an average family in our country communities that is able to hire all the necessary cutting, fitting, and sewing, without seriously clipping its resources for other needs.

One need not, in order to be thrifty and economical, always be her own dressmaker, or her good man's tailor; for there is often real economy in getting those heavy jobs off one's hands, thus leaving the wife readier and stronger for the many duties constantly arising, which no one else can do so well. But the plain sewing can be most neatly and savingly done at home, under the careful, instructive eye of the "house mother," even though she can afford to hire assistance.

Cured Them.—Some few years back the Colonel commanding the Royal Marines at Gosport was much exercised in his mind as to how to deal with two of his men who were continually fighting. Threats, packdrill and even cells were tried, but were of no avail; no sooner were they free than they flew at one another and were at it again with worse results than before.

At last he hit on a happy expedient. The next time the men were brought before him he set them to clean all the windows in the barracks, one inside the other out, and neither to go to the next window till the other had finished.

The next morning they started, and after glaring at one another for three or four windows the situation became too ludicrous; and they both burst out laughing and have been good friends ever since.

"We Knows 'um."—It was at a banquet in Washington, given to a large body of Congressmen, mostly from the rural districts. The tables were elegant, and it was a scene of fairy splendor, so to speak. On one table only were the decorations of palm leaves.

"Here," said a Congressman to the colored head waiter, "why don't you put them things on our tables, too?" pointing to the plants.

The head waiter didn't know he was a Congressman.

"We can't do it, boss," he whispered confidentially. "Dey's mostly Congressmen at all de tables 'cepting dat one; an' if we put pa'ms on dere tables they take 'um for celery an' eat 'um all up, sho. 'Deed dey would, boss. We knows 'um."

The Fretting of Children is frequently caused by Worms. Irritation in stomach and bowels, a fetid breath, constant thirst, an irregular and greedy appetite, which often craves strange things, are among the common symptoms. You will find Dr. Jayne's Tonic Vermifuge a handy remedy for them, and an excellent Tonic for the Dyspepsia of old and young. Sold by all Druggists.

Scientific and Useful.

Tennis Shoes.—One of the queerest things ever introduced is a shoe for tennis players, with a good deal of bounce promised in the bottom of it. The sole is furnished with four cushions of inflated rubber, designed to give springiness to the feet when engaged in the game.

The Camera.—A photographer of Paris has devised a camera by which panoramic views can be obtained. His camera is made to turn on its axis, so as to take in the whole horizon on a strip of sensitive paper. It is alleged that, in spite of the motion, the picture is clear in all its details.

Making Paper.—Corn husks boiled in caustic soda are being utilized for the manufacture of paper. The cooking process results in the formation of a spongy, glutinous paste, which is subjected to heavy pressure, so as to eliminate the gluten, the fibre remaining being made into paper in the ordinary way.

Salt.—One who has tried it with benefit recommends salt as a gargle for the throat for those inclined to a hacking cough, or soreness of the throat or mouth. A teaspoonful of salt is dissolved in half a tumbler of cold water, and with this the throat is gargled just before each meal. Unusual freedom from coughs and sore throat is claimed to be the result of this simple remedy.

Telephones in Warfare.—Successful experiments have been made in France, relative to the introduction of telephones for use in warfare. The telephonists are organized in sets of two men each, each set being provided with equipments for a mile line. The very simple receiving and transmitting apparatus remains attached to the military cap, and the wire on reels is in a sort of breastplate, being so light that a man's ordinary equipment weighs less than six pounds. At a distance of fourteen miles, an order for an assault, setting in motion two army corps, was received and put in execution in ten minutes.

Farm and Garden.

Pure Breeds.—One advantage in having pure bred stock is that it leads one to practice pure bred feeding. Did it ever occur to you there is scrub feeding as well as scrub stock?

Wagons.—Experiments recently made indicate that wagons are most easily drawn on all kinds of roads when the fore and hind wheels are of the same size, and when the pole lies lower than the axle.

Cleanliness.—Keep the stables clean and use whitewash liberally as a disinfectant. It is easier to keep disease away than to drive it away after it has once got among the stock, and cleanliness is one of the best means for accomplishing it.

Timber.—The growing scarcity of timber on so many our farms should lead to a closer consideration of the fence question. At the best fences are expensive. Many of them are needless. Are there not some upon the farm which can be done away with?

Stock Farming.—One advantage in stock farming is that incidental expenses for labor, implements, etc., are less than where diversified crops are grown, harvested and sold. Much of the harvesting is done by the animals, and they also carry the crops to market.

Plant Food.—A successful farmer should discover what materials a plant feeds on and what plant food is in the soil. Such knowledge as this comes not to us by nature, but by most careful study, and that the farmer must be a student as well as the "horny-handed son of toil."

Bran.—Authorities disagree as to value of bran as food for stock, and some have boldly claimed that it possesses no value at all, owing not only to its indigestibility, but to the fact that it is being more or less adulterated. All agree, however, that it greatly increases the value of the manure of animals which are fed upon it.

$100 Reward $100.

The reader of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of testimonials. Address,

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A WORD TO OUR READERS.

There is not a home in the country that would not be brightened and made more beautiful by the magnificent companion pictures offered as a premium by THE POST.

They represent, in the highest and most perfect style of pictorial art, "COLUMBUS AT THE COURT OF FERDINAND AND ISABELLA," of which the original is owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, N. Y., and "THE LANDING OF COLUMBUS," original in the rotunda of the Capitol at Washington. These Pictures (size 21x28 inches each) are genuine oleographs in beautiful colors, printed on the thickest canvas paper and have the appearance of Oil Paintings, and certainly far surpass anything ever offered in this line. In all the history of art in this country there have never been offered to the public two such grand, artistic, and at the same time patriotic productions.

This latter mentioned picture is the reproduced model from which the new Columbian, United States 2-cent stamp was engraved. The stamp will give an idea of the figuring of the picture—although more than four hundred times smaller,—but nothing can convey an adequate notion of the beauty, variety and harmony of its magnificent coloring.

They are charming as works of art, educational, and, relating as they do to the discovery of our land, possess an all-round interest that makes them both desirable now and valuable as future mementoes and souvenirs. As a memorial of 1892—the year of the four-hundredth anniversary of Columbus landing upon our shores—these pictures would not only be objects of beauty and admiration to the present generation, but also of regard and love in the eyes of those to come. No true Americans who love their country should be without these splendid art works in their homes.

Both pictures are sent to all who send $2.00 for a year's subscription in advance.

Having a Hobby.

What is a hobby? It was a trained hawk that was flown at less fierce birds when falconry was the most popular sport in England. The hobby was then as great a pet as the lithe grayhound, or the surly bull-pup, or the fatuous pug is now to its circle of admirers. Though hawking has gone the way of all cruel sports the word "hobby" remains, and carries with it some traces of its former meaning. That which pointed to a particular favorite pursuit has become generalized, and means any engrossing occupation followed for pleasure almost to the bounds of oddity.

Many of us have hobbies without being suspected of them, and we are to be pitied in consequence. The unsuspected hobbyist is usually a man whose hobby coincides with his work; and that is why he deserves pity.

The man of keen business habits takes money-getting as his hobby, and becomes a miser. The studious person is absorbed in books, until reading is a passion and time is accounted wasted which does not bring together the student's nose and a printed page.

Or the hobby may take the lighter form of a roving love for all the newspapers and all the magazines and all the talked-of books at the lending-library. Or a sensitive palate and accommodating powers of digestion may cause a man to measure out his life by his meals. Or the keeping of life in a state of effervescence with pleasure and gossip may be the consuming project of one's existence.

And yet all these dominant forms of activity may not be recognized as hobbies because they do not stand apart from the ordinary life; they are in coincidence and not in contrast, they are an accentuation of the commonplace and not a relief from it.

The money-grabber, the bookworm, the gossip, the gourmand, and the pleasure-seeker are all as truly hobby-riders as if they followed some fancy that led them at a tangent away from their every-day life; and they are at a disadvantage, because they are making the grooves in which they run all the deeper, they are narrowing their sphere through lack of change.

Let us not conclude, because we do not see a man's hobby at a glance, that he is scot-free; he is the worst of slaves if he has no cherished fancy that hurries him clear of the mill-round of his work. A hobby may carry one to the verge of oddity, but it is a good thing if it comes as a relief and sends us on a furlough.

The advantage that comes to the world from the pursuit of hobbies is chiefly owing to the concentration of study on minute branches of knowledge, the narrowing of curiosity down to a point so as to ensure exactness and progress. The man with a hobby is a specialist, and the hope of the world is directed chiefly to its specialists. The difference between the general knowledge with which most of us content ourselves and the special knowledge of the man with a hobby may in some respects be likened to the difference between rhetoric and poetry.

Rhetoric concerns itself with "flowery meads" and "shady groves;" poetry singles out "the violet by the mossy stone" or "the windy tall elm-tree." So the hobbyist turns his thought upon the particular and minute, and here and there pushes "the bounds of knowledge further yet," with an enthusiasm that often gains fire from the thought that the region of research is peculiarly the student's own ground. This principle of individual interest and of desire to advance at some one point, at any rate, is applicable in the moral as well as the physical world; but there the hobby takes another name—it is called a "fad." The history of the moral progress of the world is chiefly a record of the triumphs of hobbyists, and the gradual adoption by the commonwealth of the "fads" at which our fathers jeered.

Our readers must not suppose for a moment that we are blind to the futility of many of the hobbies of mankind, moral as well as material. It is very easy to find targets for laughter in the strange infatuations which men hug to themselves. There are more of us mad when the wind is in one quarter than would care to admit it; but the truth peeps out through our hobbies.

Why, look at the countless thousands of our fellow-creatures who think that they can write poetry, though they alter the rhythm with every line, and have no more understanding of the art of versification than a professional rat-catcher has of oil-painting! It is not fun, as one might suppose, but grim earnest, for, if he has money, the poetic madman will print his hobbling verses at his own expense.

Of late poetry has gone off a little in favor of amateur photography, which is easier in execution and barely as distressing in its results. The lover "sighing like a furnace" no longer indites a sonnet to his mistress's eyebrow, but waits round the corner with a Kodak and takes a snap view of her in an impossible light as she passes. But we must draw back from the tempting subject of absurd hobbies. Those who object to odd pursuits have a rare range for satirical comment. We will grant to them, too, that hobbies of all kinds, if followed with eagerness and concentration, tend to narrow a man's outlook.

Still, in spite of the engrossing character of a hobby and its tendency to dry up other springs of inquiry, we hold fast to the belief that, on the whole, hobbies add considerably to human happiness and have no small originative value. If there were no hobbies, we should all be swamped in what is commonplace; we should welter in what is usual and fashionable.

The hobby helps to express individuality; it throws a thousand illuminative jets into a thousand remote and dark corners of life.

PEACE and happiness cannot exist in the vicinity of an individual who has a mania for setting everybody right. He is generally unfitted for the office, being one of the exasperating people who are continually saying what they would do while really doing nothing at all. It is usually the sluggard or idler, who stands about and watches others work, who can suggest a dozen ways in which they can do better.

LOYALTY to truth requires that as much attention be paid to giving sufficient force and strength to our words as to refraining from giving too much. Yet very intelligent careful people frequently do not see this; and, in their anxiety to avoid the exaggeration which they so much despise, they fail to give that force and vigor to their words that truth demands.

WE are ruined not by what we really want, but by what we think we want. Therefore never go abroad in search of your wants; if they be real wants, they will come home in search of you. For he that buys what he does not want will soon want what he cannot buy.

EVERYTHING in life, from the largest to the smallest, has its surface and its depths; and it depends upon the eyes with which we view it whether we merely skim over the one or descend into the other.

THE great art of conversation consists in not wounding or humiliating anyone, of speaking only of things we know, in conversing with others only on subjects which may interest them.

LEARN undeviating steadiness of purpose and endurance of misfortune; tolerate the ignorant; be benevolent of heart, and learn to receive favors without being humbled by them.

TO-MORROW you have no business with. Every day has enough to keep every man occupied, without concerning himself with things that lie beyond.

DUPES, indeed, are many; but, of all dupes, there is none so fatally situated as he who lives in undue terror of being duped.

ADVICE is like counterfeit money. Most people are ready enough to part with it, but none care to take it.

CONFIDENTIAL CORRESPONDENTS.

EUPHROSYNE.—Writing on one side of the paper, when MSS. are intended for the press, facilitates the printing. Another reason for the practice is this: authors' MSS. generally require revision, and sometimes additions or corrections are made on the back of the pages by the authors themselves.

ADMIREE.—Adelina Patti appeared in America at an early age, and was well received, but was withdrawn from public life for some years. She reappeared in New York in November, 1850, as "Lucia," and made her debut in England May 14, 1861, at the Royal Italian Opera as "Amina," and from that time became famous.

H. B. R. Y.—There is no question that, according to the Mosaic record, Cain married his sister. Cain's descendants married their cousins; certainly his progeny wedded among themselves, until at last the Sons of God, i. e. the righteous descendants of Seth, "saw the daughters of men, that they were fair"—i. e. they fell in love with the daughters of Cain's descendants.

M. H. C.—You asks "whether the occasional use of the coca-leaf as a nerve or mental stimulant is injurious in any way, or whether it is followed by any considerable reaction or prostration." All the so-called tonics or stimulants, especially those which are supposed to act directly on the nervous system, will, if taken in excess, or in such a way as to exhaust the vital powers more rapidly or extensively than they increase the reserve stock of strength, produce prostration. The coca-leaf is no exception. It for the time restrains waste of tissue, but in the end fails to economize force.

HARRIETOWN.—Love means affection. What more can we say? There is the love that exists between parents and children, between brothers and sisters, and between husbands and wives. There is also a love that may be extended to strangers or a class. It is as impossible to define love as to define life, or any other function or feeling of humanity. How can we explain or describe pain or pleasure, or joy or sorrow, except by using words that serve to call up ideas in the mind of the person to whom they are addressed? Only those who have felt love can know what it is; and, as all must have experienced it in one of its forms, each can imagine for himself or herself what it is, but nobody can supply a satisfactory definition.

MILLY.—From the statement of the cause of the rupture between you and your friend it would seem as if both had been too hasty, and, as a consequence, one is as much to blame as the other. We can see no reason why an amicable adjustment of the difficulty cannot be brought about by a mutual explanation. After being intimate friends for such a number of years you should both understand each other well enough to heal all difficulties, especially of such a trivial nature as described, by a few well-chosen words of regret. If these should bring about the desired result you will find that the friendship will be more closely cemented than it was before the foolish rupture occurred, provided both will learn to bridle their tempers and their tongues.

OLD STAR.—The bells of the Christian churches were first used towards the close of the fourth century, by one of the most elegant Roman scholars of the time, Pontius Meropius Paulinus, who, having married Theresia, a Christian lady, during the year of his consulate, whilst Christianity was yet only rising into favor under Constantine the Great, by her means was converted from Paganism, and became Bishop of Nola in Campania, where bells for the first time, about the year 400, were used to summon a Christian congregation. Bells, however, had already been in use among Jews, Greeks, and Romans, for a like purpose. Some of them are very old, and have quaint inscriptions: their use was, and is, to call the people who live at a distance; and the Latin inscription, Plebes voco, signifies as much.

G. R.—In Browning's poem, "How they brought the good news," Ghent is pronounced Gent, g hard. The French spell it Gand; in the Netherlands it is called Gent. The good news was brought when Ghent, then in possession of the Spaniards who were besieging Aix, yielded up the citadel, its last stronghold, to the Confederation, November 11, 1576. This citadel was afterwards destroyed. It was of course of vital importance that one part of the Confederates should know of the success of the other part, and that the important treaty known as the Pacification of Ghent should have its effect. This is at least what we presume Browning means by his dramatic rhymed incident. He is so far above general readers in most things, that he should, in pity, add copious notes.

B. R.—"Point" in a dramatic work is merely verbal effect. Thus—"What, the Prince of Como not understand Italian?—No, not as you pronounce it." (Bulwer's "Lady of Lyons.") Here is point in epigrammatic replication, and the effect is always great on the audience. Again, in "Still Waters," the hero lights his cigar, and by the flame discovers the face of the villain. Here is constructive point. Again, in Cibber's "Richard III." (and Colley had a wonderful idea of point) a messenger comes in thus: "Mess. My lord, the Duke of Buckingham is taken. Rich. Off with his head! So much for Buckingham!" This sentence, often quoted as Shakspere's, is full of points of suggestion. It is not beautiful, not rhythmical, nor philosophical, nor terrible, nor epigrammatic, but it throws a wonderful light on the revengeful character of Richard.

IN MY DREAMS.

BY W. W. LORD.

If in my dreams I might but hold thee,
Sweet saint of my fond soul;
If in my dreams I might enfold thee,
Life's love would be my goal.

Let dreams weigh down my eyes,
All waking life let sleep reclaim,
And visions of my love arise
In tender, radiant dream.

Let earth have all her countless flowers,
One sweet white rose is mine;
Tho' frost blight falls amid her bowers,
It touches not my rose divine.

Oh, let me dream of her in Love's Elysian
Of calm and quiet rest;
Forgetful of the world, in perfect vision,
My white rose on my breast.

The Red Room.

BY A. T. R.

IT was a generally known and accepted fact that there was one room at Marsden Manor which was always kept shut up, and never occupied under any press of circumstances. What made it all the stranger was that the room—it was a bedroom—was a commodious and well-situated apartment in the north wing; and yet it was never used, no one ever slept there—not even at those festal seasons when the house was fullest, and every cubic foot of accommodation was made the most of.

Lady Marsden might shake her head helplessly, and wonder where they were going to put all the people; and Sir Richard might rumple his hair, and talk vaguely of "shakedowns"; but never for one moment was it suggested to make use of the red room.

Sometimes, perhaps, Lady Marsden would venture so far as to remark:

"What a pity it is——"

Then she generally broke off with a little shiver, and the sentence was rarely, if ever, concluded.

Sir Richard, who knew exactly what was passing through her mind, would usually reply:

"Yes, confound it! but of course it's quite out of the question."

And then Lady Marsden would exclaim:

"Oh, Richard!" with another shiver, and the subject would be dropped until a similar emergency arose.

The Marsdens were an old family, and Marsden Manor dated back to—well, the particular century is not material; but it was a very old house, to which such occasional additions had been made as taste or convenience called for. The Red Room, as has been already stated, was situated in the north wing. It was a large, gloomy-looking chamber, with heavy, old-fashioned furniture. There was—as might have been expected—the once inevitable four-post bedstead, together with antique bureaus and other appurtenances, all after the same style; while whatever of color the room contained was red—deep, dark, dingy red—a red which was nearly black in some lights, and in others showed patches of a brighter and almost sanguined hue.

Was the room haunted then, or what was the reason that it was never called upon to shelter any of the many guests who came and went?

The Manor was an old house, and, as is the case with most old houses, had more than one story and tradition hanging about its weather-beaten walls. What, then, was the particular mystery in connection with the Red Room?

That was a secret which was known to few, or, to speak more correctly, it was perhaps really known to no one. All that even the privileged few knew was, that more than a century ago a terrible tragedy had taken place which had caused that apartment to be regarded with abhorrence, so that for many years it was shut up and never entered. Then, as time passed, and the memory of what had taken place became dim and far away, if not actually discredited, the room was swept and garnished, and once more made ready for an occupant. But only for a single night. The next morning this same individual was found to have slept his last sleep on earth. He was found lying dead upon the bed with strange marks upon him; and again the room was closed, and remained so for a long time.

Then, again, as the memory of the second tragedy became faint and blurred, or was explained away and attributed to more natural causes, the room was prepared and taken possession of by a youthful sceptic, who snapped his fingers mentally and physically at the unseen or the supernatural, and retired to rest one night full of health and spirits. And he, too, was found dead in his bed?

Oh, no! He was alive next morning, but—well, he was never quite sane afterwards. He was found crouched in a corner, between the bed and the wall, with both hands clasping his throat, as though to protect it from something, and with several long, red, raw marks, like scratches, disfiguring his face.

He lived—or rather existed—for some years after this, being never sufficiently sensible at any time to be able to explain in any way the cause of the terrible affliction which had befallen him, nor even, until the very last, to utter a single connected sentence—and the scratches never healed.

One day the end came, and just at the last a glimmer of light appeared to penetrate the long-darkened understanding. He looked round at those who were standing near and smiled. Then a sudden unspeakable horror convulsed his countenance, and he uttered the first coherent sentence which had been known to pass his lips since he had been so sadly and strangely smitten.

"That long brown arm!" he cried.

Then he fell back shuddering and died.

This last event took place some dozen years before my story opens and before the present baronet succeeded to the title, but the memory of it still haunted the Red Room, and caused it to be shunned even by those whose acquaintance with the circumstances was of the faintest and least reliable nature.

Still the present Lady Marsden, who was a notable housewife, insisted on having the room kept aired and in some sort of order, a duty which was anything but relished by those upon whom it devolved; for it is hardly necessary to add that the fact of there being something "queer" about the Red Room was an open secret to the domestic staff at the Manor. So it went on until October having come round again, and the Manor being as usual, full of guests, Sir Richard one morning received a letter, the perusal of which caused him to knit his brows and mutter sundry exclamations, such as: "Confound it all! If I'd only known sooner! What on earth is to be done now?" etc., etc.

This same letter, the advent of which caused its recipient so much perturbation, bore the address of a London hotel and ran as follows:

"MY DEAR DICK—Here I am back again in the old country, and glad enough, too, I can tell you. After all, though, the old country would be nothing without the old friends, and there is one old friend, at least, from I believe I may safely reckon on receiving a welcome at any time and under any circumstances. This being the case, and bearing in mind your often repeated injunction never to wait for an invitation, I am merely sending you a line to warn you that I am about to claim your hospitality once more, and hope to be with you in a few hours from the receipt of this letter.—Very truly yours,

"HENRY VERNON."

Sir Richard read the letter through more than once, keeping up all the time a running fire of exclamations such as we have chronicled. Then, as though he found these an altogether inadequate mode of expression, he began to swear softly.

To him entered Lady Marsden, who, at one perceiving the air to be highly charged with electricity, enquired:

"What is the matter, dear?"

"Matter enough!" exclaimed Sir Richard. "Here, read this!" thrusting the letter into her hand. "Here's my old chum, Hal Vernon, who has only just returned to England after a couple of years' absence, writes to say that we may expect him almost immediately, and not so much as a bed of any sort to offer him. It's the most confoundedly awkward and annoying business that could possibly have happened. Here am I with a house full of people, half of whom I don't care a rap for, and not a vacant hole or corner left for the oldest friend I've got. I declare I should like to take and bundle some of those chaps out neck and crop."

Lady Marsden agreed, readily enough, that it was most awkward and annoying, but was unable to see any way out of it.

"Hang it all! went on Sir Richard. It's all my own fault. Whatever possessed me to invite that man, Barker, who hardly knows one end of a gun from the other, in spite of his tall talk, and that young muff, Cattermole, and two or three others? I suppose I couldn't give any of 'em a hint? No, of course not. But what on earth am I to do? It's not as though it was any one else, but Vernon——"

And Sir Richard broke off and stamped about the room with vexation. Lady Marsden looked sympathetic as she handed him back the letter.

"I'm sure I am quite as much put out as you, Richard. You know Major Vernon is one of my favorites; but there is absolutely nowhere that we could put him, unless——" She looked at her husband meaningly. "But, no, of course it is of no use thinking of that," with a little shiver.

"Eh, what?" said Sir Richard, evidently struck by the same thought. "Ah, yes, of course, that would be a way out of the difficulty; but, as you say, its quite out of the question."

He was absently turning the letter over and over in his fingers.

"I suppose there's nothing for it but to —— Hullo! Why, what's this? A postscript, by Jove, and I never noticed it."

He read it first to himself and then aloud, the irritated expression he was wearing gradually giving way to one of astonishment as he did so.

"By Jove," he cried, "what a singular coincidence! I suppose," addressing his wife, "that since he proposes it himself we may as well agree to it? After all, you know," waxing confident as he spoke, "I never could see any earthly reason why we should give in to an old family fable in the way we have done all along."

"No earthly reason," repeated Lady Marsden emphatically; "well, perhaps not—however, you must do as you please, but for my part——"

Here she was interrupted by one or two of the earlier risers among the guests strolling in in search of breakfast, and had to turn her attention to matters of an undoubtedly earthly tendency.

The postscript which produced such a change in the condition of affairs was a very simple one:

"If, as is not unlikely to be the case at this particular season, you should happen to be short of house-room, pray remember that I am well accustomed to rough it, and if there should be—as I believe there is—such a thing as a haunted room at the Manor, I shall be more than satisfied with such accommodation, as I am quite sure that no ghost will care to trouble itself about an old soldier like myself."

So for the third time was the Red Room made ready, after a long interval, to receive a guest.

The two women servants who were told off to perform this duty did not bring any very great willingness to bear upon the task. Still it was done, and the room looked fairly cheerful with a fire burning upon the hearth—for the day was dull and chilly—though by the time that everything was completed it was nearly dusk. Gathering up their dusters and brushes, the maids were preparing to leave the room when one of them, turning sharply round, demanded of the other:

"What did you do that for?"

"Do what?" was the equally tart reply. "I didn't do nothing."

"Then who was it pulled my hair?"

The two women looked at each other in silence for a few second; then, with one accord, hurried from the room.

Major Vernon arrived before dinner. He was a tall, bronzed, wiry-looking man, who appeared as though nothing less than a cannon-ball would make any serious impression on him. He was received by his host with as much effusion as the average well-bred Englishman is capable of evincing—that is to say, the latter made a pump-handle of his friend's arm and remarked:

"How are you, old man? I'm most confoundedly glad to see you."

To which the other replied:

"Same to you, Dick. What sort of a bag did you make to-day?"

"Oh, fairish," was the answer; "the birds were rather wild. By-the-bye, we've given you the room you mentioned. My wife was very much against it at first, but as it was your own suggestion, and there really wasn't another vacant——"

"Good heavens, man, don't apologise!" was the interruption. "Why, what could I wish better? Besides," with a laugh, "you don't suppose this is the first time in my life I've occupied a so-called haunted chamber! I've never found my rest in the least disturbed in consequence."

A little later and the Major was inspecting his quarters by the aid of the firelight, and that of the wax candles upon his dressing-table.

"Hump! A comfortable enough room, though gloomy—a fact which may be attributed to the bedstead and the sombre character of the hangings. I wonder," with a semi-sarcastic smile, as he surveyed his surroundings, "what particular form the apparition, or whatever it may be called, takes? What's that picture?"

He strode across, candle in hand, to the fireplace, over which hung a large dark oil-painting in a massive tarnished frame. So blackened was it by time and other deteriorating agents that he had a little difficulty in making it out to be a landscape of some sort. Still, a landscape it was undoubtedly.

"Humph!" he remarked to himself again. "I thought it might have been a portrait—the portrait of the ghost who is supposed to have a fancy for this particular apartment. It seems rather a pity it should be only a landscape after all." He laughed aloud, but checked himself almost immediately. "What strange echoes there always are in these old houses," he said.

It was very late when he re-entered the room. He came in yawning.

"Confound those fellows in the smoking-room," he grumbled, "keeping me up to this hour! I shall be shooting all over the place to-morrow."

He had, for the time being, entirely forgotten the associations of the room until his eye was somehow attracted towards the old dark oil-painting over the mantelpiece, and sleepy as he was, was nevertheless instigated to take up the candle and again examine it.

To his amazement the light revealed to him something quite different to what he expected.

"I could have sworn it was a landscape," he exclaimed as he passed the candle backwards and forwards in front of it. "I remember saying to myself that it was a pity it was not a portrait, and, lo and behold, it is a protrait—the portrait of a woman, and a confoundedly unpleasant specimen of the sex she is, too. Foreign, I should say by the complexion, not particularly young, and with about the most malicious expression I have ever seen on any countenance."

He held the light higher.

"Look at that arm! What a long skinny, brown-looking limb—and the hand, with those long pointed nails, is more like the claw of some bird of prey than anything human. It is very strange—very strange indeed," he mused, "for I could have taken my oath that it was a landscape earlier in the evening, and I have had nothing but one brandy and soda since dinner. Perhaps—but it's hardly likely—they may have changed the picture for some reason or other? In which case I consider it decidedly an alteration for the worse. For of all the she-devils I have ever seen depicted on canvas, this one beats the lot. Do you hear what I say, my lady?"

He nodded mockingly at the portrait, and the painted eyes glared back, while the curved fingers with their long claw-like nails seemed to make ready to strike.

He turned away yawning more than ever.

"By Jove, how sleepy I am!"

Half an hour—an hour passed, during which the dropping of the cinders in the grate and the deep breathing of the sleeper in the four-post bedstead were the only sounds that broke the silence.

Gradually there came a change.

The fire died out upon the hearth, and as the room grew darker, and darker, so the slumberer's rest became troubled, and he began to toss, and turn, and mutter incoherently.

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Sir Richard, who was always an early riser, was up earlier than usual next morning. As he purposely went out of his way to pass the door of the Red Room he left a strong inclination to knock and, as he put it to himself, make sure that it was all right. However, reflecting that perhaps his friend might be annoyed, or, at any rate, would be sure to ridicule him, he thought better of it, persuading himself that it was not likely that anything could happen to a man like Vernon, who had seen any amount of hard fighting in all quarters of the globe, and knew how to take care of himself if any one did. In spite of this conviction he found himself unable to settle to anything, or to carry out any of his ordinary ante-breakfast programmes. So he fidgeted about, in and out, driving the servants to distraction by the irregular and unforeseen nature of his movements, until a few of the more advanced stragglers began to put in an appearance and greet him with encomiums on the weather and cheerful anticipations of good sport, to all of which he replied a good deal at random. This being observed by Lady Marsden, she proceeded to add to his perturbation by telegraphing enquiries with her eyebrows over the urn. As a last resource it occurred to him to put an enquiry to one of the servants.

"Do you know, James, whether Major Vernon is—— Ah, here he is. Good heavens!"

The exclamation caused everybody to look up and cast curious and enquiring glances from the man who had uttered it to the other who had provoked the same.

"Why, Major," remarked that very young Cattermole who had previously inspired such exceedingly inhospitable sentiments in the generally genial host, "why, Major, how uncommonly seedy you look this morning!"

"Confound his impertinence!" muttered Sir Richard.

"And how on earth did you come by that scratch? Looks as though you'd been out fighting cats on the tiles."

This had the effect of immediately diverting all attention from Sir Richad, and concentrating it on the Major, who was understood to mutter something vague about his hand having slipped in shaving. An explanation which, instead of clearing up matters, only made them worse, for, as young Cattermole subsequently remarked to a friend, "a fellow doesn't generally cut himself from the corner of his eye to his chin in shaving. Besides, a cut is a cut, and a scratch is a scratch, and there is no mistaking the sign of finger-nails."

A sudden sense of restraint seemed to settle down upon those who sat round that well-spread board—a feeling of something "being up," something wrong, instinctively took possession of the minds even of those who were least acquainted with any cause for the sensation. Sir Richard kept casting furtive glances at his friend, who, independently of the mysterious mark upon his face, certainly merited the expression, "seedy," which had been applied to him. It being also noticeable that, not only did he eat little or nothing, but, when he received his cup of coffee, his hand shook so that half its contents were spilled; and, above, all there was a peculiar lividness underlying the tan of his complexion, productive of a singularly unwholesome effect.

The result of all this upon Lady Marsden was such that she did the wildest things with the sugar tongs, while her general conversation was suggestive of that highly-improving game known as "cross questions and crooked answers."

At the very first opportunity Sir Richard took his friend aside.

"Now, then," he said, "I want to know the truth."

For a moment it appeared as though the other were going to prevaricate.

Then, noting the genuine distress upon Sir Richard's countenance, he altered his tone.

"Dick, old fellow," he said, "I don't know what to say, and I don't know what to think."

"Then there is something in it, after all?" enquired Sir Richard excitedly

"Dick," answered the other, chewing one end of his long moustache reflectively, "if any one had told you I was an out-and-out coward, what should you have said?"

"Said!" exclaimed his friend; "I should have told them they didn't know anything about it."

The other smiled a strange, inscrutable smile as he answered:

"It's the truth, Dick."

Then, sinking his voice into a chilling whisper:

"Last night I was afraid—for the first time in my life, and I hope the last."

Sir Richard opened his mouth twice without being able to find utterance. The third time he was more successful, and contrived to put the question:

"What of?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know?"

"I give you my word of honor, Dick, I don't know."

"Did you see anything?" The question was putting hesitatingly.

"No."

"Then you heard——"

"Nothing."

At this extraordinary state of affairs Sir Richard's condition took such an alarming turn for the worse that his friend, in pity, made an effort at explanation.

"Look here, all I know is this. I fell asleep almost directly, and must have slept some time undisturbed. All at once I became aware of some great horror overshadowing me as I lay in a condition between sleeping and waking. I felt some terrible danger threatened me, but what it was I could not discern. I seemed to be asleep, and yet was perfectly aware of my surroundings, and made several frantic efforts to wake. Then came a sensation of utter darkness—of darkness that could be felt—an expression which I fancy I have heard sometime or other in church; at any rate it exactly explains my condition at the time."

The Major paused for a moment to wipe away the perspiration which had started out upon his forehead. Sir Richard kept his eyes fixed on his friend and never moved them for an instant during the recital.

The other resumed.

"Now comes the worst. In the midst of that horror of darkness a struggle appeared to take place—a struggle in which I was contending against something, what or whom I cannot say, nor even whether the encounter in which I was engaged was mental or physical. I knew a man once—it was when I was in India—who was strangled by a cobra while he was asleep. I fancy his sensations must have been something like mine."

He shuddered and was silent for a second.

"How long the struggle lasted I cannot say. To me it seemed hours, but it might have been only minutes or even seconds. Again and again I felt that I was on the point of being overcome, and again and again I resisted the unknown but terrible fate that seemed to threaten me. At last, when I felt that it was impossible to hold out longer, I found myself involuntarily repeating, over and over again, a verse that, as a child, I was taught to say before I went to sleep, and which I had no idea I had retained in my memory all these years:

> "Four corners to my bed,
> Four angels overhead,
> Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
> Bless the bed that I lie on."

He broke off here and seemed to challenge the other to laugh at him. Sir Richard, however, did nothing of the sort, but only stared at him with the same fixed stare as before.

"I tell you I found myself repeating these childish words over and over again until it seemed that the blackness became less black and the struggle less fearful, and—well, I can't exactly say I woke, for, as I have told you and now tell you again, I was more or less conscious the whole time, but I found myself sitting upright with the perspiration dripping from me and the light just beginning to steal in through the windows."

As he concluded he was again compelled to wipe the moisture from his forehead.

"But," and it seemed to cause Sir Richard a considerable effort to put the question, "how did you come by that?"

And he drew his own finger across his cheek in the same direction as that taken by the scratch which disfigured his friend's countenance.

"I don't know," was the answer. "All I do know is that it was the first thing I saw this morning when I looked in the glass."

"Well," said Sir Richard, after a pause, during which he kept his eyes fixed on the scratch, "of course you don't sleep there again, even we have to make you up a bed on the billiard-table."

"What!" was the indignant response, "do you think I am going to give in like that?"

"But, surely, after your experience of last night——" began the other blankly.

"Do you wish to insult me?" burst in the Major. "Good heavens, man, surely you know me better than that! Offer me any other room and I leave the house."

Then calming down a little:

"Look here, Dick, if you don't want me to regret the confidence I've shown in you, let me have my own way for—well, for another couple of nights at any rate. Come, now, I ask it as a favor?"

"But—but what am I to say to my wife? She suspects something already, and will be sure to insist on knowing all about it."

"Tell her—oh, tell her I had the nightmare," answered the Major. "After all it will be the truth, or something very much like it. By-the-bye, whose portrait is that over the mantelpiece in the Red Room?"

"Portrait?" echoed Sir Richard; "there's no portrait that I know of. Only an old landscape that has hung there ever since I can remember."

The day was fine and the birds plentiful, and as Major Vernon found that, in spite of all, his hand and eye were equally to be depended on, his spirits rose in proportion as his recollections of the previous night became less vivid, until he found himself almost blushing at the remembrance of his terrible feelings.

He was still inclined to the same view of the subject when night came; in spite of which he did not forget to subject the picture over the mantelpiece to another investigation.

"Somehow I forgot to notice it by daylight," he said to himself, "but I will take the present opportunity to convince myself which it actually is—whether landscape or portrait."

Again he threw the light of the candle upon the dark canvas.

"Landscape, by Jupiter!" he exclaimed. "Can it have been my eyes that played me such a trick before? Strange, too, for I can recall the woman's face so plainly, with its evil expression. And then that hand, with the long curved nails—just the sort of nails to——"

A thought struck him. He crossed to the dressing-table where the old-fashioned mirror, broader than it was long, reflected a countenance which now bore an expression quite the opposite to its ordinarily somewhat blase one.

The long red scratch stood out with startling and angry distinctness.

"Strange," he murmured, "very strange!"

"Why, Major," remarked young Cattermole again at breakfast next morning, "you look even seedier to-day than you did yesterday. Somehow or other your night's rest doesn't seem to agree with you."

As before, public attention was immediately centred upon the individual thus pointedly referred to. Sir Richard glared at the one and looked anxiously at the other; while Lady Marsden, observing thunder in the atmosphere and making an effort to turn the conversation, helped herself to marmalade instead of mustard—a mistake which she accounted for by observing that they both began with the same letter, which made it very confusing.

Apart from the Major's appearance, which was best described by the term ghastly, there was something unfamiliar about him that at once struck Sir Richard without his being able, for the moment, to determine in what it consisted. Meanwhile the object of so much undesired solicitude, feeling compelled to account in some way for the too evident deterioration in his outer man, muttered something about "a touch of his old complaint"—which as it might have been jaundice, lumbago, dyspepsia, toothache, or a hundred other ills, opened up a wide field for conjecture, such as had the welcome effect of staving off young Cattermole's unwelcome attention for the remainder of the meal.

All at once Sir Richard succeeded in solving to his satisfaction the cause of the alteration in his friend's appearance.

"It's the collar," he told himself; "I never remember to have seen Vernon in one of those stiff, upright, all-round affairs before. I wonder what has made him take to that style all at once? And I wonder whether he had another attack of nightmare, or anything of the sort, last night?"

Both questions were answered later on.

"What sort of a night did I have, you ask?" said the Major. "Just look here."

He removed collar and tie, thus laying bare his throat, upon the surface of which several bluish marks and discolorations were visible.

"What—what on earth!" Sir Richard stuttered and stammered.

"What does it mean, you ask? That is just the question that I have been putting to myself. You remember what I told you yesterday of my experience of the night before? Well, it was just the same thing over again, only, if possible, more vivid and acute. There was the same horror of darkness—though, as before, I was half conscious of my surroundings—followed by that impotent struggling against something vague, intangible, and terrible. But this time it was accompanied by a sense of suffocation. Something, I thought, was slowly pressing the life out of me—my breath was almost exhausted, when, by a fearful effort, which it distresses me even to recall, I forced myself upright, feeling, somehow, that this time I had only escaped by the skin of my teeth—though from what I don't know."

"Vernon," said Sir Richard, after this you cannot, you must not dream of occupying the room another night."

A dogged expression settled upon the other man's countenance.

"I mean to see this thing through," he answered, "and nothing that you can urge will alter my determination. One more night and then——"

"Did you ever," his host put the question in a solemn, stealthy manner, "did you ever hear the story in connection with the Red Room? I have almost forgotten it myself, but I may as well tell you what I do know."

"No, no," was the hasty response, "not now, I will not hear it now. Wait one more night—wait until to-morrow and tell me then."

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That day passed as had the previous one, and night came again.

"I wonder," said the Major, as he contemplated himself grimly in the mirror, in which he saw reflected plainly the long red scratch upon his face, as well as the purple discolorations upon his throat; "I wonder what other personal embellishments I may have to boast of by this time to-morrow? Perhaps a black eye or a broken nose. Well, there is only this one night."

This time he did not fall asleep so quickly. For some time he lay watching the fire as it burnt itself out. A sudden spurt of flame made a momentary illumination by which the picture over the mantelpiece became plainly visible.

"By Jove!" he muttered, raising himself on his elbow, "the portrait again, by all that's mysterious!"

The flame died out as quickly as it had kindled, but the last thing it showed him was the gleam of those malignant eyes, and those long, curved, talon-like fingers.

For a moment he debated as to whether he would rise and turn the picture to the wall, but disinclination to stir, together with a fierce contempt of his own weakness, kept him where he was. Then he dozed, or seemed to doze, though through it all he was aware of that face looking down upon him, and gradually coming nearer and nearer, until he felt those basilisk orbs glaring straight into his own in spite of the closed lids and——

With an effort he regained possession of his senses, at least, of so much of them as allowed him to become conscious of—what?

The fire, which had appeared to have died out, suddenly revived, sending forth a dull red glow that revealed to him plainly the outlines of the furniture in the room, and the curtains of the bed, bringing out strange, unsuspected tints in these last, of which he found himself idly taking note.

"It is the color of blood," he murmured—"the color of blood—the color——"

Was it the effect of the firelight flickering upon it, or did one of the curtains at the foot of the bed move?

Yes, it was being drawn back slowly and noiselessly. What was that? Surely, an arm—a long, lean, brown arm, with a hand terminating in curved, claw-like fingers and long, pointed nails.

A horror, such as few are ever destined to experience, fell upon him as he realized this. His limbs became powerless, and his tongue felt like a piece of dried leather in his mouth. Then the curtain was dropped and the thing disappeared.

But instead of this proving a relief, the thought of its being there—somewhere—hidden—but still there—was so full of unspeakable terror, that he could almost have prayed to see it again.

Where was it? Where was it?

He rolled his head—the only portion of his body in which was any power of movement—on the pillow in an endeavor to—— Ah!

Casting his eyes upwards he caught sight of it smoothly insinuating its way through the canopy overhead. It was going to attack him from above while he lay there helpless, like a dog, and could not even cry aloud for deliverance from the cursed thing. And all the time he knew not even whether he was sleeping or waking.

With an effort he succeeded in closing his eyes. But only for a second; for the uncertainty as to what was about to happen was more awful than anything else. So he opened them again, and, no—it was there no longer.

He tried to move his head as he had before, but it was fixed—fixed as in a vice. From head to foot he was like a dead man—a dead man!

What was that?

Something was moving softly and delicately—traveling over the pillow towards him. It was an arm, a long, lean, brown arm—a woman's arm—an arm that had no body belonging to it—which was slipping, slowly but surely, over the pillow towards the place where his head lay, and drawing nearer and nearer, nearer and nearer, with the fingers curved and the long, short, cruel nails glistening horribly. To think that he could not utter a sound—not the very faintest sound, though his life depended on it! And the arm—the long, brown, bodiless arm—was coming nearer and nearer; in another second those fingers would have clutched his throat, those long nails be embedded in his flesh and——

Sir Richard was uneasy in his mind. He could not sleep; indeed he did not even try to sleep. Irresistibly the idea

was suggested to him that his friend—his very oldest and best friend—was threatened by some vague, but no less unmistakable peril.

"He wouldn't let me tell him the story of the Red Room, though, after all, I don't know what good that would have done. Still, I wish I had done so, and I wish even more that it would not keep presenting itself so plainly to my mind, when I had almost forgotten it, too."

A clock struck in the distance and Sir Richard took a sudden determination.

"I'll just slip on some clothes and go upstairs and creep along the passage to the door of his room. Perhaps he doesn't lock his door, or he may have forgotten it for once—at any rate I can listen and then, if everything seems all right, I can come away without disturbing any one, and my mind will be more at ease."

The determination once formed was speedily put into practice, and Sir Richard found himself, candle in hand, stealing like a thief at dead of night up the stairs and along the passages of his own house.

The Red Room lay some distance away from his own apartment, and at the rate at which he was traveling he had ample time in which to change his mind with regard to his purpose, and bestow various uncomplimentary epithets upon himself. When he reached the door, however, he told himself that he might just as well try it and see whether it was locked or not. He would do so very softly, without disturbing any one, and accordingly had laid his hand upon the lock, when——

His ear was caught by a sound from within—a muffled, gasping, choking sound—a sound that suggested horrible possibilities. Whether the door was locked or not he never knew. In another instant he had burst it open.

"Hal!" he cried, "Hal! What is it? For Heaven's sake answer me!"

But there was no answer. Only the sound continued, though much fainter, as though it would soon cease altogether

He rushed to the bed, tore aside the curtain, and saw—what?

The face of his friend convulsed, agonized, almost black with—what was that thing clutching his throat?

It looked like a hand—a small, brown, woman's hand.

Whatever it was, Sir Richard flung himself upon it, but even as he seemed to grasp it, it melted away and there was nothing but the bare throat of the man before him, whose breathing seemed now to have ceased altogether.

Hardly knowing what he did, Sir Richard rushed to the window and flung it open; then, returning, caught up the water jug and half deluged the bed and its occupant with its contents. Fortunately this Spartan treatment appeared to suit the case, for, after a few premonitory symptoms of returning consciousness, Sir Richard had the satisfaction of seeing his friend open his eyes.

Catching sight of the familiar but anxious countenance bending over him, a look of relief crossed his face, followed by another of perplexed enquiry as to his whereabouts and the reason of his unpleasantly damp condition.

This, in turn, was succeeded by one of horror, as, raising his head from his pillow, he looked round him and asked in a queer, strangled, barely audible voice:

"Is it gone?"

"What?" enquired Sir Richard with intense eagerness.

To which the other, speaking thickly, and as though it pained him, answered with a shudder:

"That long, brown arm!"

Next morning there was considerable comment excited by the appearance of the Major with a bandage round his throat.

"Sore throat! Lost his voice," remarked in irrepressible young Cattermole later on to a crony. "What an unfortunate beggar the fellow is. Still, for all that, I don't see any reason why Sir Richard should have lost his temper, and as nearly as possible told me to mind my own business, when I happened to ask the Major whether he had felt anything of it yesterday, or whether it came on suddenly in the night."

"And what is the original story in connection with the Red Room?" asked the Major on the very first opportunity when he and his host were alone, and the former's voice was a little restored to him.

"Well," was the answer, "all I know is that a long time ago—a hundred years or more—one of my ancestors took for a second wife a woman of foreign extraction, who came from no one knew where. His first wife had died leaving him with one son, and in due course this new wife presented him with another. She was according to report, of a strange, fierce nature, and her husband and every one else went in fear of her. As time went on she began to show signs of intense jealousy and hatred towards her stepson, who, on his father's death, would naturally succeed him. Toward her own offspring she exhibited the same degree of savage affection which a tigress may be supposed to lavish upon her young.

"As those two youths grew up they bore a strong family resemblance, in spite of the difference of parentage on the female side; what was more they were—for stepbrothers—unusually attached to each other. This mutual affection, however, so far from softening the mother of the younger, merely seemed to inspire her with fiercer wrath and envy towards her husband's elder son and heir. So one night, having excited herself to a murderous rage against the young man who stood between her son and the title and estate, she stole to the room where her stepson slept——"

"The Red Room," interpolated the Major.

"The Red Room," acquiesced Sir Richard, "and with her own hands——"

"Well, go on," impatiently, as Sir Richard paused in order to accentuate the denouement.

"With her own hands strangled the sleeper."

"Her own stepson," commented the Major. "Ugh! what a ghastly story!"

"Hear it out," said Sir Richard. "It was night when she committed the crime. As soon as it was light she returned, possibly to gloat over her victim, instead of which she made a terrible discovery."

"And that was?"

"For some freak or other the two stepbrothers had changed apartments. The younger, on that particular night, had occupied his elder brother's room and bed, so that her awful act had reverted upon her own head, and instead of the hated elder she had killed her own only son."

"Horrible!" exclaimed the Major. "More than horrible! Is anything further known about her?"

"Very little, beyond the fact that she is supposed to have perished by her own hand."

The Major mused for a moment before putting the next question.

"Have you a portrait of her anywhere?"

Sir Richard shook his head.

"I believe there was one; but what became of it I do not know. Possibly it was destroyed by some one who considered that, as the original was no credit to the name, the preservation of the duplicate would be more or less of an insult to the rest of the family portraits."

"Then you know absolutely nothing respecting her appearance?"

"Well, I have heard that she was remarkable for her brown, swarthy skin; so much so, indeed, that she was known by the nickname of 'the gipsy.'"

Major Vernon is sometimes asked how he came by that peculiar long red mark which is more like a scratch than a scar, and which it seems he will carry with him to the grave.

His explanation is not very lucid, and it is generally known among his friends that he dislikes any reference to it. As for those marks on his throat, as he always wears a high collar very few are aware of their existence.

The Red Room has never been occupied since, for the very good reason that Sir Richard has caused the entrance to it to be bricked up.

How to Have Pretty Hands.—A lady should have beautifully white hands, and no mistake. If the skin be naturally white, very little care is required to preserve it. A good soap, aided by a pinch or two of cracked oatmeal, may be used for a thorough cleansing twice a day; and, if needful, to still further cleanse them, warm water—not hot—will do the necessary work. Once a week they should be rubbed front and back, between the fingers and all, with a slice of lemon.

If these exquisitely white hands are inclined to chap, camphor ice may be applied at night, and white gloves worn to increase the softening effect. The best camphor ice is a home-made preparation of pure white wax, melted and stirred to the consistency of cream, with the addition of several drops of spirits of camphor. Holes should always be cut in the palms of the gloves to allow ventilation. For distressingly red hands, equal parts of glycerine, lemon-juice, and rose-water may be applied nightly under gloves. Daily applications of lemon-juice are sure to produce a whitening effect. Tight sleeves and smarting finger rings are a frequent source of red hands, and the only remedy for this is to remove the irritating cause. Smooth white hands may be difficult to acquire, but they are certainly within the reach of all who care for them sufficiently to make the effort required to secure them.

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

Japan has no fewer than 700 earthquake observing stations scattered over the empire, and a Tokio correspondent is of the opinion that they are all needed. He points out that not only are the Japanese shaken up by fully 500 earthquakes every year—some of them more or less destructive—but at intervals there comes a great disaster, amounting, as in the earthquake of October 28, 1891, to a national calamity. Japanese annals record 29 such during the last 1200 years.

The census figures of the town of Tompkins, Delaware county, N. Y., disclose the remarkable case of Abram Ostrom, who is the father of 27 children, of whom 20 are by one wife. Mr. Ostrom's first wife, to whom he was married in 1856, bore him four children. At her death he married again, and his second wife presented him three children. After her death, and in 1878, he took his third wife a young woman of 18 years, who has already borne him 20 children—10 pairs of twins—of whom 11 are living. Inasmuch as Mr. Ostrom is only 64, and his prolific spouse is not yet 35, the possibilities of the case are bewildering.

The first message over the Atlantic cable was a despatch from Queen Victoria to President Buchanan. There were 98 words in the message, but, owing to something getting wrong with the wires, it was 24 hours from the time that the first word was received until the last was taken off. The principal part of the message was the Queen's expression of the wish that the cable would prove a bond of union and a link of friendship between the two great nations. President Buchanan heartily concurred in this wish, and incidentally remarked to her Majesty that in his estimation this "crowning triumph of science would prove a greater boon to humanity in general than the results of all the hard fought battles ever won."

The safe or treasure rooms of the leading transatlantic steamers are interesting structures. They are so artfully concealed and contrived and so strongly built that, with a single exception, that of a Pacific liner carrying gold dust on a long voyage, we believe they have never been robbed. In some vessels these safe vaults are placed amidships, in some aft, but they are always at the bottom of the ship, below everything else, and practically right on the keel. The room is generally some eight or ten feet square and high, and built of iron plates three or four inches thick, and it is furnished with such a formidable array of locks, bolts and bars as to strike dismay to the hearts of even the defiant and most experienced burglars.

PRIZES ON PATENTS.

HOW TO GET TWENTY-FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR NOTHING.

The Winner has a Clear Gift of a Small Fortune, and the Losers Have Patents that may Bring them in Still More.

Would you like to make twenty-five hundred dollars? If you would, read carefully what follows and you may see a way to do it.

The Press Claims Company devotes much attention to patents. It has handled thousands of applications for inventions, but it would like to handle thousands more. There is plenty of inventive talent at large in this country, needing nothing but encouragement to produce practical results. That encouragement the Press Claims Company proposes to give.

NOT SO HARD AS IT SEEMS.

A patent strikes most people as an appallingly formidable thing. The idea is that an inventor must be a natural genius, like Edison or Bell; that he must devote years to delving in complicated mechanical problems and that he must spend a fortune on delicate experiments before he can get a new device to a patentable degree of perfection. This delusion the company desires to dispel. It desires to get into the head of the public a clear comprehension of the fact that it is not the great, complex, and expensive inventions that bring the best returns to their authors, but the little, simple, and cheap ones—the things that seem so absurdly trivial that the average citizen would feel somewhat ashamed of bringing them to the attention of the Patent Office.

Edison says that the profits he has received from the patents on all his marvelous inventions have not been sufficient to pay the cost of his experiments. But the man who conceived the idea of fastening a bit of rubber cord to a child's ball, so that it would come back to the hand when thrown, made a fortune out of his scheme. The modern sewing-machine is a miracle of ingenuity—the product of the toil of hundreds of busy brains through a hundred and fifty years, but the whole brilliant result rests upon the simple device of putting the eye of the needle at the point instead of at the other end.

THE LITTLE THINGS THE MOST VALUABLE.

Comparatively few people regard themselves as inventors, but almost everybody has been struck, at one time or another, with ideas that seemed calculated to reduce some of the little frictions of life. Usually such ideas are dismissed without further thought.

"Why don't the railroad company make its car windows so that they can be slid up and down without breaking the passengers' backs?" exclaims the traveler. "If I were running the road I would make them in such a way."

"What was the man that made this saucepan thinking of?" grumbles the cook. "He never had to work over a stove, or he would have known how it ought to have been fixed."

"Hang such a collar button!" growls the man who is late for breakfast. "If I were in the business I'd make buttons that wouldn't slip out, or break off, or gouge out the back of my neck."

And then the various sufferers forget about their grievances and begin to think of something else. If they would sit down at the next convenient opportunity, put their ideas about car windows, saucepans, and collar buttons into practical shape, and then apply for patents, they might find themselves as independently wealthy as the man who invented the iron umbrella ring, or the one who patented the fifteen puzzle.

A TEMPTING OFFER.

To induce people to keep track of their bright ideas and see what there is in them, the Press Claims Company has resolved to offer a prize.

To the person who submits to it the simplest and most promising invention, from a commercial point of view, the company will give twenty-five hundred dollars in cash, in addition to refunding the fees for securing the patent.

It will also advertise the invention free of charge.

This offer is subject to the following conditions:

Every competitor must obtain a patent for his invention through the company. He must first apply for a preliminary search, the cost of which will be five dollars. Should this search show his invention to be unpatentable, he can withdraw without further expense. Otherwise he will be expected to complete his application and take out a patent in the regular way. The total expense, including Government and Bureau fees, will be seventy dollars. For this, whether he secures the prize or not, the inventor will have a patent that ought to be a valuable property to him. The prize will be awarded by a jury consisting of three reputable patent attorneys of Washington. Intending competitors should fill out the following blank, and forward it with their application:

"_____, ____, 189_

"I submit the within described invention in competition for the Twenty-five hundred Dollar Prize offered by the Press Claims Company.

"_____"

NO BLANKS IN THIS COMPETITION.

This is a competition of rather an unusual nature. It is common to offer prizes for the best story, or picture, or architectural plan, all the competitors risking the loss of their labor and the successful one merely selling his for the amount of the prize. But the Press Claims Company's offer is something entirely different. Each person is asked merely to help himself, and the one who helps himself most to the best advantage is to be rewarded for doing it. The prize is only a stimulus to do something that would be well worth doing without it. The architect whose competitive plan for a club house on a certain corner is not accepted has spent his labor on something of very little use to him. But the person who patents a simple and useful device in the Press Claims Company's competition, need not worry if he fail to secure the prize. He has a substantial result to show for his work—one that will command its value in the market at any time.

The plain man who uses any article in his daily work ought to know better how to improve it than the mechanical expert who studies it only from the theoretical point of view. Get rid of the idea that an improvement can be too simple to be worth patenting. The simpler the better. The person who best succeeds in combining simplicity and popularity, will get the Press Claims Company's twenty-five hundred dollars.

The responsibility of this company may be judged from the fact that its stock is held by about three hundred of the leading newspapers of the United States.

Address the Press Claims Company, John Wedderburn, managing attorney, 618 F street, N. W., Washington, D. C.

Our Young Folks.

WHERE BESSIE HID.

BY ELLIS WALTON.

LITTLE Bessie Webb had been only two short weeks in the beautiful country home where her father and mother intended to spend their lives, and now, all at once, she was told that she must return to the city the very next day with Mrs. Mitchell, the rector's wife, who would take care of her on the journey.

Bessie loved the free life at Ballycastle dearly, and she did not love Mrs. Mitchell; besides this, it seemed hard to be separated from her parents so soon; and so she cried and complained all day long.

Mrs. Webb had been delicate for a long time, and the country doctor told her she must go at once to London, in order to have more care and attention than he could give her.

"You may become strong if there is no delay in treating your case properly," he said; "but if you linger on here, any shock or chill might do you injury which would never be cured."

So Mrs. Webb consented to do as he wished, and since Bessie could not go with her, it was thought best to leave the child with a kind aunt in Dublin. But Bessie thought she was quite old enough to live on alone in this delightful Ballycastle until her mother's return; and being a wilful little lady, she began to think how she could manage to get her own way.

"I will hide somewhere until Mrs. Mitchell has started," she said to herself. "I have often wished to get out alone on the hills, and when papa and mamma are in a hurry preparing for London, they cannot make any other plans, and I shall be left with Nannie."

Nannie was the old Irish cook, a great friend to the child, who coaxed her into letting her do very much what she liked when they were together.

Softly Bessie opened her shutters: it was a lovely night, and the grass looked soft and dewy. It was hard to keep awake, but she managed to do so for a while, and then, when all was quiet, put on her frock and the pretty new shoes left for her to wear on the journey, and crept downstairs.

The library window opened on the lawn, and was fastened; so Bessie slipped out, and in a moment was off, free and happy, as she had often longed to be.

At first it was delightful, as she ran along merrily, laughing at the queer shadows which fell everywhere. It was not quite dark, for this was Midsummer night, and the sky shone clear, and she was not at all cowardly; but now the fancy struck her not to go to the mountain, but to the bog. This was a dangerous forbidden spot, where she thought they would never look for her.

The country children always run barefoot—how nice the moss must feel to naked toes! Bessie's new shoes pinched her, and she quickly slipped them off, and danced along without anything between her feet and the damp grass. Running away was great fun, she thought.

The bog was a very pretty place. Heather, and sun-dew, and little asphodel flowers mingled with the bilberry leaves and mosses, but Bessie did not understand that the green spots were the wet ones, and before she knew she felt her feet sinking in the soft treacherous ground. Clouds had come up across the sky, and it grew very dark, so that she could not see her way, and a low wind whispered strangely in the birch and sallow bushes. Bessie tried to draw out her foot, and succeeded with a great effort, but when she had taken a few steps forward, another "shaking scraw"—as the Irish call these hidden quagmires—caught and held her.

A dreadful fear began to creep into Bessie's heart that she would sink in the bog and never be seen again, and some stories which old Nannie had told her of terrible deeds and lonely deaths in such places crowded upon her. She began to cry at last, and stretched out her arms helplessly, calling for aid.

She might have been swallowed up, as she feared, but that just then her hands caught hold of a birch branch, and she drew herself up by its help and crouched down, not daring to move again for hours.

Was help coming at last? Bessie saw a flicker of light over the wet ground, and called louder; but the gleam flickered and trembled along, now here, now there, in a strange terrifying way.

It was only a will-o'-the-wisp, that light which plays over dead wood in marshy places, as you have seen a lucifer match shine when rubbed in the dark. Bessie did not know this, and she grew sick and cold with fear, and shut her eyes, but opened them again in a moment.

Everything was strange and dreadful: the wild birds calling from the lake, the heron's scream, the moaning wind, but nothing so horrible as the will-o'-the-wisp. Bessie felt a chill creeping over her and her voice failing. She had been a long time alone now, and it seemed as if years had passed since she left home.

Gathering together all her strength, she gave one wild cry, and then hardly knew where she was until she felt a man's strong arms round her, and was sobbing out all her fear and repentance.

Of course they would have sent to look for her when she was missed at Ballycastle, but help might have come too late, only that Paddy Gilligan, who lived beside the bog, had been looking out for poachers, and heard the child's cry. He carried her home tenderly, and paused at the lodge gate.

Morning light was coming back, and old Nannie stood weeping at the door, but at sight of Paddy and his burden she ran screaming into the house. Then Bessie heard a low cry from her mother's voice, and freed herself from Paddy's arms to run to her.

Poor Mrs. Webb could not wait at the castle when she knew Bessie was out in the night, and had hurried down to the lodge to get help, partly dressed as she was, and hardly able to move from weakness. Mr. Webb was not at home that day, and old Nannie was of little use.

Bessie crept in, hardly daring to meet her mother, who sat in the porch, looking so frail and white and trembling, that all at once Bessie realized how ill she was.

But Mrs. Webb held out her arms, and in a moment the child was clinging to her, all wet, and barefoot, and cold.

No one scolded Bessie. She had caught cold, and had to lie in bed, and feel very ill and miserable for many days; but her greatest punishment was the knowledge that the fright she had given her mother, and the delay in going to town, had done the mischief the doctor feared, and Mrs. Webb could never be quite well again.

Bessie is grown up now, and has a house and children of her own, who are never tired of hearing of the terrible night that she spent in the bog.

IN AFRICA.

The tribes of the Lower Niger, which we have just traversed, are divided for the most part into three great families—the Idzo, the Ibo, and the Igara—and the greatest of these are the Ibo, subdivided into innumerable tribes.

The Ibo men are about five and a half feet high, and are muscular, strong, and healthy. The women, when young, are well formed, but when they reach the age of twenty they become either very fat or very lean. An Ibo beauty must be excessively fat and have a well-polished ebony skin. They are cleanly in their habits, bathing frequently in the river, and are industrious after their fashion, and though they are not very good hunters, they are expert fishermen. Their dress is simple. The women wear strips of cotton cloth from the waist to the knee, and tie a bright-colored handkerchief round the head. On the body they wear strings of pearls and black beads, and round the ankles, iron, brass, or ivory rings.

Ivory anklets, often very heavy, are only worn by the women of wealth and importance; but the metal anklets worn by others may be many pounds in weight, and some of them wear huge brass plates, perhaps a foot in diameter, which, once fixed on the ankles, are never removed. The men wear a single strip of cotton cloth, but those who come much in contact with the Europeans are now learning to wear trousers. Their weapons are flint-locks, bows, and spears, the latter both for hurling and thrusting.

The huts are built of mud and matting, and are quadrangular in shape. The centre is an open courtyard, at one end of which is the apartment of the head of the house, while the wives and family are accommodated in the other rooms on the right and left of the courtyard. There is no furniture or ornament, and but a few household utensils and weapons.

The Ibos have a barbarous custom of destroying twins. A woman who gives birth to twins is regarded as something accursed, and the children are taken from her and thrown into the bush to perish, while she is proclaimed an outcast and driven from the village. To hold up two fingers to an Ibo woman is to offer her the greatest insult possible. They are very superstitious; they worship idols of wood, mud, and iron, which are regarded as protectors to be propitiated at various periods; and slavery exists among all the tribes.

The other great family of the Lower Niger, the Igaras, are also superstitious pagans, but they are not cannibals, and instead of destroying twins look upon them as lucky. Slavery also exists among them, and, indeed, it is supposed that the Igaras were originally slave-hunters from the Yoruba country, who wandered eastward in search of slaves and game. J. C.

IRVING'S LETTERS.—The perfect simplicity of Washington Irving's letters, the frankness with which they reveal a feminine affectionateness of disposition and clinging to even the inanimate surroundings which help to constitute a home, are their greatest charm. On his return from a visit to Washington in 1863 he writes:

"I was sad at heart at parting with you and Mary. Had not your establishment fallen to pieces around me I hardly know when I should have got away. I could have clung to the wreck so long as there was a three-legged stool and a spoon to make shift with. You see what danger there is in domesticating me . . . Yet never did old bachelor return to such a loving home. However, let me be humbly thankful, and repress all vain glory. After the kissing and crying and laughing and rejoicing were over I sallied forth to inspect my domains, welcomed by my prime minister, Robert, my master of the horse, Thomas, and my keeper of the poultry yard, William. Everything was in good order, and I really believe more had been done in my absence than if I had been at home. Gentleman Dick, my saddle horse, put his cheek against mine, laid his head on my shoulder, and tried to nibble my ear. Taffy and Tony, two pet dogs of a dandy race, received me with well-bred though rather cool civility, while my little terrier, Ginger, bounded about me almost crazy with delight. The hens were vying with each other wich could bring out the earliest brood of chickens, the Chinese geese were sailing like frigates in the pond. I forbear to say anything about my Durham heifer or my pigeons, having gone as far with these rural matters as may be agreeable. Everything was just as heart could wish."

THE STORMY PETREL'S ENDURANCE.—During a recent trip across the Atlantic the passengers on one steamer had a vivid illustration of the endurance of the stormy petrel. Shortly after the ship had left the Irish coast two or three of these birds were sighted at the ship's stern. One had been captured at some previous time, an its captor had tied a bit of red flannel or ribbon round its neck and let it go. The bit of red made the bird very conspicuous, and it could be easily identified. That bird, with others that could not be so easily distinguished, followed the ship right across the ocean. Rarely, during the daytime at least, was it out of sight, and if for an hour or two it was lost to view while feeding on the refuse cast overboard, it soon reappeared, and the last seen of it was within a few miles of Sandy Hook, when it disappeared. When the fact is considered that the ship, day and night, went at an average speed of nearly twenty miles an hour, the feat performed by the daring traveler can be appreciated.

ARTIFICIAL MARBLE.—In nature, marble is made out of chalk by water which percolates through the chalky deposits, dissolve the chalk particle by particle, and crystalizes it, mountain pressure solidifying it. It has been found that similar results may be accomplished by chemical means. First, slices of chalk are dipped into a color bath, staining them with tints that will imitate any kind of marble known. For this purpose the same mineral stains are used as are employed in nature. For example, to produce counterfeit "verde antique," oxide of copper is utilized. In like manner, green, pink, black and other colorings are obtained. Next, the chalk slices go into another bath, by which they are hardened and crystalized, coming out, to all intents and purposes, real marble.

ACCURACY.—The truly accurate man neither despises minuteness nor makes an idol of it. He is broadly general where a general statement is what is wanted. He is minutely detailed where minute detail is what is needed. But, whether general or detailed, he is always careful that what he says conveys at once a clear idea and a true idea. Details will sometimes make a statement more clear, sometimes less. He acts accordingly.

THE WORLD'S HAPPENINGS.

Physician's carriages have the right of way in the streets of Berlin.

A race-horse clears from twenty to twenty-four feet at a bound.

One-seventh of the land surface of the globe is controlled by Russia.

Nearly all the shoemaking business in California is done by Chinamen.

The cabmen of Paris are now forbidden to smoke pipes while driving a fare.

The Romans had saucepans, gridirons, colanders, dripping pans and toasting forks.

In the dreary deserts of Arabia the rosemary and lavender flourish to perfection.

Artificial scars are sometimes painted on the faces of Heidelberg students who never fought.

Fully 25 per cent. of all the champagne that is made is lost by the bursting of bottles.

The direct light of the sun is about 600,000 times more intense than that of the full moon.

A man in Exeter, Maine, who is worth $100,000, takes delight in leading a brass band as drum major.

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage plays the banjo. He prefers the old tunes, "Annie Laurie" being his favorite.

The population of many South Sea islands manufacture their entire suits from the products of the palm trees.

In 1180 the Pope prohibited the cross-bow as barbarous, and threatened cross-bowmen with excommunication.

Three factories in this country that make the albumen paper used in photography use over 3,000,000 eggs every year.

The native countries of the tallest and the shortest people of Europe, the Norwegians and the Lapps, adjoin each other.

The woodpecker has a three-barbed tongue, like a Fijian spear, with which it draws out the worm which it has excited by its tapping.

It has been estimated that upwards of 18,000 horses annually die or are killed in London, and of these about half succumb to accidents or infirmity.

Plates for dessert with miniatures of dear friends in medallions upon them, is a late caprice with some of the persons who are for anything if it's new.

A gang of Kansas convicts were baptised during the winter by being plunged into the icy waters of a creek through a hole that had been cut in the ice.

At an Anarchist funeral in Paris recently there was an unexpectedly sensible feature. At the cemetery gate a collection was taken up for the poor widow.

Nearly all the razor hones in use have been petrified by immersing them in a lake in Ireland, which has the remarkable quality of petrifying any substance placed in it.

An English writer declares he saw two salmon fight a duel. The fish plunged at one another for two hours, and night came on and the end of the battle could not be witnessed.

An envelope has lately been invented which exposes part of the letter to the stamp that makes the postmark. Thus the inclosure will bear official proof of the date on which it was posted.

A Maine cat is reported to have stolen a beefsteak from the breakfast table to give to a baby of which it was fond. Afterward it brought the child a robin and a mouse, which it had caught.

A London publisher has undertaken the publication of a newspaper on postal cards. The initial number contains four illustrations, a comic tragedy, a few alleged puns and some advertisements.

White horses are not to be employed in the German army hereafter. As smokeless powder is likely to be used in warfare, the white horses could be seen at a great distance, and made the targets of the enemy.

The Duchess of Edinburg is bound to live in Russia three months of every year, or she would forfeit a large part of the allowance which she receives from her father, the late Czar. Her husband, as the heir to the Duchy of Coburg, takes up his residence there for some time annually.

English travelers in Japan are often sadly taken in by curio dealers, who palm off modern bric-a-brac as antiquities at extravagant prices. Accordingly an association has been formed at Tokio to safeguard both the foreigners and the credit of the national industry, the members undertaking to sell foreigners only genuine works of art and to charge uniform rates.

When the famous bull-fighter, Frascuelo, the idol of Madrid, died in that city not long ago, of a wound from the horns of a bull, he left behind him a trunk. This trunk was filled with letters—letters from ladies—love-letters from ladies. Senora Frascuelo, being of a thrifty temperament, and not jealous, disposed of the documents to a syndicate of blackmailers. These gentry realized a large sum from their speculation.

DISCIPLINE.

BY KATH MELLERSH.

Can it be true that you have read in vain,
Life's strange, sweet parable of good and ill,
And missed the meaning? Have you felt the chill
Hard force of winter, and the tender rain
Of sunny springtide — seen the dawn and wane
Of star on star that God had sent to fill
The darkness of your sky with light, until
The sun came forth to do his work again?
The very fields, when storm and sun have done
Their will upon them, yield one harvest vast
Of praise unto their Maker! Are there none
But wasted joys and sorrows in your past?
Shall it be said of you: "Lo! this is one
Whom life hath failed to educate at last!"

HEARING IN ANIMALS.

The sounds made by many insects change according to their feelings; one wasp, a very clever builder, brings the little pellets of earth for its pouch-like nest with a song of triumph, a busy hum succeeding, as it begins work. Certain sounds are also said to accompany certain acts: thus a sting is preceded by a sharp sound.

An angry bee's hum is different from the hum of the merely busy bee. Bee's wings vibrate some four hundred and forty times per second to make their ordinary sound, thus producing the note A, but a tired bee makes the note E, produced by three hundred and thirty vibrations a second.

A house-fly makes almost exactly the same note, its little wings actually vibrating three hundred and thirty-five times per second to produce its familiar and irritating buzz. That this almost incredible speed is really attained, and is not mere guesswork, is known in two ways. First, the exact number of vibrations necessary to produce this sound is well known; and still further to prove the fact, a fly has been so fixed that each movement of its wings made a mark upon a rotating cylinder; the marks were then counted; and the calculation as to the number of movements of the little fly's wings, which had already been made from the sound produced, was proved correct.

Spiders, too, can certainly hear. Many drop out of their webs on to the branches below—probably from the habit of thus protecting themselves against wasps—on hearing a shout or sound made by a tuning-fork; others try to seize it; while a high-pitched shout caused several of another kind (the diademas) to raise their legs and strike at the imaginary insect. Spiders are equally attracted by notes of a low pitch, but a very loud sound causes them to retreat; while a heated tuning-fork fills them with terror.

Scorpions have a sensitive ear for most sounds, including those made by a violin. They are even affected by sounds which are quite inaudible to the human ear (does it sound paradoxical to speak of an inaudible sound?); while a tuning-fork so angers a scorpion that it will attempt to sting the fork, if near enough. Blowing air on them immediately stops their flight. Two appendages—or antennæ—under the thorax of scorpions probably represent their organs of hearing.

Reptiles, amphibia, fishes, and even creatures as low down in the scale of life as the jellyfish, all have auditory organs; but whether this always and necessarily implies the power of hearing, is still somewhat doubtful.

Some molluscs, for example, the fresh-water mussel, can boast of auditory organs—of very simple structure, it is true—in their feet; so can the cyclas, a bivalve. In fact, do not we ourselves sometimes use other organs besides the ear for hearing? After Beethoven, for example, became deaf, he used to hear by pressing a stick against the piano, while the other end touched his teeth.

Birds undoubtedly have a very keen sense of hearing; thrushes may often be seen intently listening for worms underground, while many can also accurately imitate a great variety of sounds.

Parent birds may sometimes be noticed teaching their young ones to sing; some young wrens were lately seen sitting in front of their mother, who was singing; one young bird tried to imitate her, but after a few notes, failed. The mother then began again, when the young bird made a second and a third attempt—at each effort, singing a few more notes correctly, until the whole song was learned. Each of the young birds was taught in the same way until all could sing.

The higher animals, as is well known, are conscious of sounds; indeed, the horse and the deer have a very acute sense of hearing; while many animals, the dog and the cat, for example, can discriminate between different tones in the human voice, and even between different notes in music.

A dog distinguishes perfectly well between a scolding and a caressing tone, while one dog was noticed invariably to howl at the note D, whether played or sung; and Gautier writes of a cat that had a similar dislike to the note G, and always tried to silence the note or the person producing the sound.

Livingstone describes a monkey concert he once overheard; screams, chattering, the noise of pebbles dropping and of wood purposely struck against hollow trees, all combined to produce—as one can easily believe—a quite unique effect. Then there are the howler monkeys of America, so called from the hideous noises they keep up the whole night long. Travelers say these sounds can be heard at a distance of two miles, and that the imitation of various animals, together with the sounds of roaring, groaning and moaning, are enough to make one believe that half the beasts of the forest are in deadly combat. These dismal noises are mostly made by the males; the females join, but with a less harsh cry.

Cows, again, are very partial to music, and have been known to follow a singer repeatedly, as closely as possible. So will wild cattle. In fact, the power of singing has more than once been the means of rescuing people from certain death through a threatened stampede of wild-cattle in the prairies.

DR. A. S. ATKINSON, of Pittsburg, has written a paper in defense of tobacco as a preventive of disease. He says that experiments have proved that the smoke of tobacco on the micro-germs of dental caries is very beneficial. "In case of Asiatic cholera this summer, one could do no harm in becoming an inveterate smoker for the summer months." He also regards tobacco as of use in fighting typhoid fever and other diseases.

Grains of Gold.

Mere concealment is in most cases a mischief.

A kind word will go farther and strike harder than a cannon ball.

It is a hundred times easier to inflict pain than to create pleasure.

A good name, like good will, is got by many actions and lost by one.

With some folks, what you wear counts for more than what you are.

There is no greater slave than a man who owes another money he cannot pay.

Economy is no disgrace; it is better living on a little than outliving a great deal.

The eye of the master will do more work than both his hands. Not to oversee workmen is to leave your purse open.

I have often noticed that a kindly, placid good humor is the companion of longevity, and, I suspect, frequently the cause of it.

If a man has a right to be proud of anything it is a good action done as it ought to be without any base interest lurking at the bottom of it.

The disesteem and contempt of others is inseparable from pride. It is hardly possible to overvalue ourselves but by undervaluing our neighbors.

Shall we speak of the inspiration of a poet or a priest, and not of the heart impelled by love and self-devotion to the lowliest work in the lowliest way of life?

Femininities.

A philosopher says a girl should marry for protection—not for revenue only.

London society is much exercised as to whether or not men shall wear spats—(overgaiters).

There is a tooth of Buddha, preserved and worshipped in an Indian temple, which probably all the gold in the world could not buy.

Old anglers say that if you wish to catch a fine fish you must not throw your bait directly at him. Young ladies may take notice.

At a printers' festival recently, the following sentiment was offered: "Women, second only to the press in the dissemination of news."

It is just as easy to say a kind thing as a hard thing about your neighbor, but most people seem to think it isn't so entertaining to the listener.

Scotch marriages are very frequent upon the last day of the year. There are more marriages on that one day than on any other seven days put together.

A young man at Ypsilanti, Michigan, who recently advertised for a wife, claims to have received 18 replies from husbands in a neighboring town offering him their wives.

French women are taking to cycling with enthusiasm that is second only to that shown for the exercise by Frenchmen. The craze is now, but it is already in full activity.

Miss Sadie Means, a telephone girl, has been expelled from a church in Columbia, S. C., for talking an hour on Sunday through a telephone, whose wire was with her a means to an end.

St. Peter: "Enter. Why do you hesitate?" New spirit: "I don't see any usher." "We have no ushers here. Sit down where you please." "Dear me! how different heaven is from our church."

The following advertisement is from an Australian paper: "Wanted, a young woman (the plainer the better), to help a small, genteel family in their domestic matters; one without ringlets preferred."

"They say Mrs. Smith took on terribly at Smith's death." "Yes, poor thing! She could scarcely be reconciled to his loss." "Did she get much insurance?" "No; it was a total loss. All his policies had lapsed."

Employer, kindly: "You are becoming very round-shouldered, Mr. Faithful." Bookkeeper, with hopes of a vacation: "Yes, I fear that I am." Employer, solicitously: "Hadn't you better stop riding a bicycle?"

Barber: "They say John L. Sullivan and—" Man in chair, impatiently interrupting: "Do you barbers always talk about John L. Sullivan when you're shaving a man?" Barber: "Not always. We generally try to size up a customer and we talk to him according."

"It has been found," says a New York exchange, "that cholera microbes will live from two to three hours in beer, five minutes in white wine, and fifteen in red wine. Coffee kills them in two hours, weak tea requires several days, while in cocoa they flourish indefinitely."

"I have lost my little Fido," said the young woman chokingly. "Here is a notice offering a reward for his recovery." "To go in the 'lost and found' column, I suppose," said the advertising clerk. "No, sir!" she replied haughtily. "I want it to go among other personal items, sir!"

The success of a dinner given by a well-known hostess in London to a number of bachelors, when they were waited on by ladies dressed as maid-servants, was so great that it is intended to reverse the arrangement, and let gentlemen attired as butlers and footmen wait on the ladies.

Professor, lecturing: "Finally, I would instance mental aberration, a mania of which the learned are frequently subject, and occasionally make themselves ridiculous without knowing it." After saying which, the professor took, instead of his hat, the lamp-shade off the bracket, put it on his head, and walked out.

The instincts of the heart are very true. There are eyes that are like no other eyes to us when we first meet them. There are voices that, having been once heard, haunt our dreams. All the cool reasoning in the world is worthless when compared to the signs and tokens with which reason has nothing to do—which say to us, "He has come," or "She is here."

Miss Lena Wells, a young woman, who lives at Carrollton, Georgia, is an expert with the rifle. She is said to shoot boxes from the heads of her companions at ten paces, and ashes from a cigar held in the mouth of a man at the same distance. Miss Wells can also strike a match at a distance of ten paces, and is said to perform several other difficult feats in shooting.

The Queen of Italy has a peculiar hobby. She delights in the collection of gloves, boots and shoes, which have been worn at different periods by royal and imperial personages. Amongst her large stock of these curiosities she has a pair of white slippers and a fan which belonged to Mary Queen of Scots; also shoes worn by Queen Anne and the Empress Josephine.

Masculinities.

Man always likes to have his innings, but he also enjoys his outings.

The Duke of Cumberland has a collection of family jewels worth $3,000,000.

A man at Paw Paw, Michigan, has brought suit against a debtor for 25 cents.

The wise employe always laughs promptly when the proprietor makes a joke.

Alfred Mace, a son of the old-time pugilist, Jem Mace, is a preacher in the West. His sermons have aroused great enthusiasm.

It is only when a man is complimented that he thinks he sees himself as others see him.

When you see some men, the first thing you think of is a large, overbearing wife.

When a man screws his courage up to the sticking point, he usually does so by means of a corkscrew.

The death rate is lower among clergymen, says a Boston paper, than among any other class of workers.

A Cardinal's salary is about $4500 a year. His official fee to the Vatican when he receives the red hat is $2500.

Miss Rinkles: "I'll never marry!" Miss Prime: "Don't say that. Some one may leave you a fortune some day."

It is the cynical bachelor who thinks that most marriageable young women have graduated from the school of design.

A writer calculates that it takes eight times the strength to go upstairs that is required for the same distance on the level.

When you have nothing else to let the wife of your bosom have, make a virtue of necessity, and let her have—her own way.

Mesmerism consists of subjecting the mind of one person to the control of another. The less mind a man has, the easier he is mesmerised.

Captain John Christiansson is credited with having made a dive of 196 feet in the water of Elliot Bay, at Seattle, Washington, a few days ago.

"If I should propose to you, Maud, what would your answer be?" "I am sure I do not know, Mr. Remson. Women are very foolish at times."

Hansom, who created the cab that bears his name, sold his patent for $50,000; but the company failed and never paid him. He only received $1500 for his invention.

Shawber: "Some one has invented a new kind of bank to save money. Now there is only one thing more they want." Singerly: "What is that?" Shawber: "A new kind of man."

An insane ruffian in London recently attempted to murder a woman, but was prevented by a dog, who seized the assassin by the coat sleeve and held him until help arrived.

Never chide your wife (or husband) before company, nor prattle abroad of the mishaps at home. What passes between two people is much easier made up before than after it has taken air.

"No," said Miss Varden, "I don't like grown children; but I think little bits of children are real nice. Don't you, Mr. Bachelor?" Old Bachelor: "Perhaps little bits would be, but I don't like them whole."

A short time ago a woman, the first of her sex, graduated in medicine in Mexico. As an appropriate compliment her fellow-students of the other sex got up an amateur bull-fight in honor of the occasion.

The latest development of the coin-in-the-slot device is an automatic railway ticket selling machine. It has for some time been in use on the Berlin City and District Railway, and is said to give satisfaction.

He is not poor that hath not much, but he that wants more. Want lies in wishing. He lacks most that desires most. He is richest who does not covet and desires least. The most contented are the most happy.

Harry L. Whaley was arrested the other day at Buffalo, N. Y., for passing a raised postoffice money-order. When the case came up for trial the prisoner snatched the order from the judge's desk and swallowed it, thus destroying all the proof against him.

"Do you see that pale young man calling out 'cash' at the ribbon counter?" "Yes." "Fate is awfully funny sometimes. Ten years ago, when we were boys together, his one ambition was to be a mighty hunter and catch the bounding buffalo with a lasso."

The egg is considered one of the best remedies for dysentery. Beaten up lightly, with or without sugar, and swallowed at a gulp, it tends, by its emollient qualities, to lessen the inflammation of the stomach and intestines, and by forming a transient coating on these organs, to enable Nature to resume her healthful sway over a diseased body.

Cardinal Gibbons recently expressed himself in this way: "Young men who have received an imperfect and superficial education have generally a great deal of presumption. They want to appear wise and learned, and think in order to do so they must affect a degree of skepticism and infidelity which frequently results in an entire loss of faith."

LATEST FASHION PHASES.

It was a cry from a maiden's soul, and this was its cause: A fond but rigid mother was talking to her pretty young daughter about the sinfulness of trying to outshine one's neighbors and telling her that the adornment of a young girl should be modesty and humility. It was then that the poor child lifted up her tear stained face and said:

"Yes, mamma, I know that is all true and that you are perfectly right; but, oh, I look like a sardine in that old hat!"

Who can blame the girl with all her natural love for beauty and freshness, and particularly when everything is so bright and beautiful, and when every hat is a bower of loveliness shading the flower face below? Certainly not I. When she and hundreds of other bright young girls pass the show windows where everything is alluring and the most exquisite flowers are trailed and twined all around, where shining ribbons lie about in mocking profusion and bonnets and hats of every conceivable form are temptingly displayed on pretty waxen faces, who can blame the little hearts for wanting a new one—for choosing out one particular love and longing for it, remembering all the while that she "looks like a sardine" in the old one.

Do men never have desires after the unobtainable in the way of dress suits, fancy neckties or red kid gloves? Do they ever have to look in a hatter's window and think how much they would like one of those shining silk hats with the newest roll to the brim? If they do, I am sure they never condemn themselves as looking like sardines in the ones they have on. It would be beneath their dignity to think themselves anything less than perfect even in an old hat, but the poor little maid who longs for the bonnet is truly modest.

Let us hope that somehow in the somewhere girls can always have all the new bonnets they want. This millennium might come if girls would learn to trim and make their own bonnets. The difference in the price is so very great that the knowledge is certainly worth striving for. Then no pretty girl need bewail and compare herself to one of those greasy little fishes.

They tell us suddenly that tea gowns have had their day. It was a pretty long day and a pretty day they had. Some ladies with very conservative tastes, or who realize that tea gowns are more be-

TEA JACKETS AND FANS.

coming than anything else, will cling to them, so that they will not really go out entirely. The tea jacket is now the favorite and is in some respects better, as it can be worn with any skirt—that is, almost any skirt, a lady's own taste suggesting the proper combination better than I could. These tea jackets are very ornate and dressy and loose. They are laced and beribboned to the heart's content.

One I saw recently had a fall of handsome black chantilly reaching from the neck down, 40 inches from shoulder to bottom. Outside of that was a simulated zouave of pale purple stellienne silk, with sleeves to match. There was a close hemmed, box plaited ruffle as trimming, as may be understood by a glance at the picture. Lace falls finished the short sleeves, and loops and long ends of lilac ribbon finished the front. Such a jacket is a very graceful adjunct to almost any toilet. It would be very elegant over a white or light skirt.

Another jacket was snugger in form, having a sort of full military skirt. The model was of dark green velvet, with cream ribbed silk lapels and a handsomely arranged jabot of white lace down the front, which is intended to be left open slightly. Around the neck and the sleeves is a fulled band of figured silk, made into knots on the arms. Altogether this is very elegant and would do duty over almost any skirt.

Below these pictures I have put two of the daintiest new fans, which any bright young lady can make for herself. A young girl of my acquaintance made one like each by aid of a couple of old time parasol handles. The feather fan had a very small foundation of stiff muslin over wire, which was coiled and turned around the handle until it was perfectly solid. This was covered with white silk and the plumes sewn on. It requires 8 to 10, and they can be bought for about $3. One yard of white satin ribbon finished it. Such a fan ready made would cost from $10 to $15, according to where bought.

To make the other she took a 5-cent Japanese fan and fastened the ivory handle in place of the wooden one and covered the whole with light pink crepe de chine and then sewed lace over the outside, bringing the end down gracefully under a spray of wild rose with its leaves. This fan had the advantage that she could take off the artificial flower and attach a rose, a bunch of violets or any other natural flower, and it was very much admired.

There are brocades and brocatelles in every shade and color, which are to be used for home gowns, tea gowns and evening dresses.

The taffetas are in some instances plain; in others brocaded in small figures and so dainty and delicate that they are perfect pictures. There is also a large line of tartan plaid silks.

There is a new material called china mousseline. It is 24 inches wide and of the most exquisite fineness and is quite transparent. It is not harsh like the other silk muslins, but has all the softness of china crape. Silks gain always in public favor, but the time has come when we are obliged to admit that our American silks are the best in the world.

Odds and Ends.

ON A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

An excellent soap for washing flannels, ginghams of delicate colors or any washable material can be made at the expense of a few cents and a little economy on the part of a housekeeper. Take 3 pounds of new unslacked lime and 6 pounds of washing soda. Pour over this 5 gallons of boiling water. Stir until the soda is all dissolved. Let it stand until it becomes perfectly clear, then pour off the clear liquid. Add it to 6 pounds of clear fat (saved from the cooking) and 1 cup of salt. Boil for 3 hours. Take a little out in a saucer, and if it hardens pour the mixture into a wooden tub, and when cold cut into bars. It will soon cure and be as white and firm as white castile soap.

Cornmeal, the yellow Indian meal of our pantries, is said to be one of the best cosmetics. A jar of it should be kept on the toilet stand, and after the face has been washed in really hot water with a pure, unscented soap the meal should be rubbed all over it well and gently. Then it should be dusted out of the hair and eyebrows, the face wiped lightly over with a bit of soft old linen, and the skin will feel delightfully smooth and satiny.

Desserts were never more delicious, more easily prepared or more to the taste of the men folks than they are to-day. Pies, puddings, dumplings, custards, tarts, and even ice creams have been done away with, and the bitter sweets substituted at the perfect dinner.

The dessert of desserts is figs in maraschino, one fig and a slice of caramel or pound cake; the second choice is a brandy fig with cream sponge cake; cherries in anisette with walnut cake is another delicate finish for a nice dinner, and brandy cherries with angel cake will be found equally choice.

The figs are expensive. They can be bought only in liqueur, but it is easy enough to prepare the cherries. Canned goods may be bought in any grocery store, and in unfashionable places candied cherries are sold at reasonable prices. One pint of fine brandy or liqueur will do for a quart of solid fruit. After a course dinner three cherries are as much as any one will want. One of the best chefs in the city keeps a stock of bottled figs and candied cherries and pineapple on hand. When something very nice is ordered for dessert he serves the three fruits in whatever liqueur he may have at hand, with assorted cakes. His cake list, by the way, includes forty different kinds. Candied fruits should stand in the liqueur a few hours before serving, while the canned or preserved fruits may be dressed in a few moments. Bits of preserved apple, pear, peach, apricot, plum and ginger in brandy or liqueur come under the head of bitter sweet desserts. It goes without saying that these are not dishes for little folks.

LOCKED IN THE CASKET.—In the dressing-room of a happy married woman, who lived in New York, there stands in a conspicuous corner a small ebony casket, with silver trimmings. It is locked and has not been opened for ten years.

A little over ten years ago, the occupants of this home were married. The wife was brought up in a luxurious home and was a member of gay social circles. The husband was equally rich in worldly possessions, but with no liking for the round of society's pleasures. His young bachelorhood had been passed in independent club life and the sober enjoyments of his books and pictures, for which he had a strong taste.

The honeymoon was barely over before a speck of discontent appeared on the horizon of their lives. It grew rapidly and soon obscured the sun of their wedded happiness. They mutually fretted under the strain of the marriage bonds. He disliked to be dragged to receptions and balls, and she chafed over his literary inclinations and wanted to keep the house gay with guests and incessant going and coming.

At last the explosion came, and, after a full and free discussion, it was mutually agreed that they should separate. As there were no legal grounds of divorce in New York State, they journeyed together beyond the Ohio, remained away long enough to acquire a statutory residence, and on a certain day a decree was duly granted severing the marital chains.

The lawyers, in handing each a copy of the degree, explained to them that, although granted by the court, it would not take effect, and was so much waste paper until entered and filed in the clerk's office of the county where the court was held. The lawyers' fees were paid, and each took the parchment. Both felt free and independent, but each hesitated to put the final seal to the transaction.

By a common decision, arrived at separately, it was settled to return to New York, whence the decrees could be sent for proper filing. The return trip was by the same train. A conversation arose on the subject of their changed relations. Their newly acquired freedom put a different phase on the discussion. Explanations and expressions of opinion were more tolerant in the face of restraint removed. Concessions, which a false dignity prevented hitherto, were now broached as possible had they remained man and wife.

In the end it was discovered that it was not the tie itself which was galling and unbearable, but the fact that it was a tie, binding fast and permanently. The separation never took place. The decrees were locked in the casket, to which each carried a key.

At first the casket stood in the husband's library, but, as years went on, occasional questions about it became irksome. It was sent upstairs to the wife's rooms, who, in her turn, tired of it, and it was tucked in a corner of the dressing-room. But it still exists, and there are those who will say that it holds in it possibilities of freedom and unalloyed happiness of that home.

OBSERVATION PARTIES.—"Observation parties" are the latest thing in society. An observation party affords a great deal of amusement, and, in addition, displays the fact that few persons are either good observers or have good memories. The members of the observation party are asked by the host to observe the furnishings of the dinner-table, for instance. Then they are given five minutes to write down a list of the articles that are on the table. The person whose memory is best, and who can write down within the prescribed time—five minutes, say—the largest number of articles on the table is awarded some sort of a prize. At one observation party, the other evening, one young lady was able to remember and write the names of but seven articles that were on a dinner-table. The "observation party" as a form of social entertainment is novel, and may be useful in assisting persons to form the valuable habit of correct observation.

FIREPROOFING.—A simple substance for fireproofing combustible materials has lately been brought forward by a Russian inventor, and its efficacy tested with very gratifying results under the auspices of the Moscow Imperial Society of Agriculture. At the public trials made, a shanty was built entirely of straw, and, after being covered with the paste, was subjected to a hot fire, the straw, under the operation, merely changing from a yellow to a reddish-brown color, without igniting or even cracking. The society in question has, it is stated, decided to introduce this new invention or process throughout the empire, considering that it must prove of the highest value in villages where the houses are thatched with straw. The cost of this preparation, as well as of applying it, is said to be very slight.

"You demand high wages," said the mistress of the house, "but I am willing to pay good wages to a good girl. You are prepared to give satisfaction, I suppose, in the matter of references?" "As to references, mum," replied the young woman, haughtily, "I don't require 'em. References is out of place between ladies!"

R. R. R.

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There is not a remedial agent in the world that will cure Fever and Ague and all other Malarious, Bilious and other fevers, aided by RADWAY'S PILLS, so quickly as RADWAY'S READY RELIEF.

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Perfect digestion will be accomplished by taking one of Radway's Pills every morning. By so doing

DYSPEPSIA,

SICK HEADACHE, FOUL STOMACH, BILIOUSNESS, will be avoided, and the food that is eaten contribute its nourishing properties for the support of the natural waste of the body.

Observe the following symptoms resulting from disease of the digestive organs: Constipation, Inward piles, fulness of blood in the head, acidity of the stomach, nausea, heartburn, disgust of food, fulness or weight in the stomach, sour eructations, sinking or fluttering in the pit of the stomach, swimming of the head, hurried or difficult breathing, fluttering at the heart, choking or suffocating sensations when in a lying posture, dimness of vision, dots or webs before the sight, fever and dull pains in the head, deficiency of perspiration, yellowness of the skin and eyes, pain in the side, chest, limbs and sudden flushes of heat, burning in the flesh.

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FRESH PERIODICALS.

"Cassell's Family Magazine" for May is a real spring number as full of pictures and interest as the joyous month itself. Published at New York.

"The Magazine of Art" for May is out as is a treasure of beautiful art pictures, and literature related thereto, that none interested in this subject should be without. Published at New York.

In the current "Lippincott" the complete novel is "Mrs. Romney," by Rosa Nouchette Carey. The other contents are of the usual high character. Published in this city.

"The Quiver" for Sunday and general reading is one of the best magazines printed in the language. Published at New York.

"The Popular Science Monthly" for May is filled with the best of articles treating, in the most interesting way, of the latest development of the world's sciences. Published at New York.

All readers, the young especially, and not excluding the old, will find "Wide Awake," in matter and pictures, as enjoyable a magazine as ever came from the press. Published at Boston.

"St. Nicholas" for May is out and in the way of both pictures and reading matter is a feast of good that both young and old can revel in. Published at New York.

The "Public Ledger" of this city, one of the oldest daily papers in this country, and among the leaders in the journalism of the world, has given up its former folio form and assumed a more modern dress. The page is now about half its previous size, with double the number of pages, making it much more convenient to handle. Two other innovations adopted are illustrations and display type, about all left for it to do, as in the matter of news, editorial, general literary matter and make-up it couldn't be improved.

WOMEN WORKERS.—In these days when so many women, from choice or circumstances, are destined to be self-supporting, the old chivalric nonsense about woman's degradation in being compelled to labor for her own bread is almost forgotten, and we are beginning to regard her with admiration proportioned to the capability she exhibits in the field she has chosen for the employment of her powers.

Society is in fact becoming more and more convinced of the fact that women differ in mental organization as much as men, and that many are better fitted for the outer, active life of the world than for the inner, quiet duties of the home, and any attempt to force upon all the same rule of life would not only be arbitrary and unreasonable, but productive of harm to the community.

It has been demonstrated that the feminine brain is as well qualified for certain work as the masculine; while many occupations pursued by men seem peculiarly fitted for women.

Let these be fully opened to them. In well-to-do circles there is some remnant of the old notion that girls should not be expected to work for their own support, and there it is we find the largest proportion of women without a purpose; but it will not be long, we think, before the practical spirit of our era will have swept that notion from its ancient place, and the girls whose advantages for self-culture should be equalled by their opportunities for the exercise of their talent and acquirements, will, like their brothers, demand suitable employment.

The ambitious, enterprising boy finds something to work for, some object that whets his courage and stimulates his diligence; the ambitious, spirited girl equally needs an object—some material, encouraging object—towards which she can work, and impressing her with the noble sentiment of usefulness to the world.

ONLY A SPOOL OF THREAD.—"To make a spool of thread," says a manufacturer, "is a complicated process. Only the very best Sea Island cotton can be used for this purpose. The cotton is taken in a raw state, and torn all to pieces by a machine called a 'breaker.'

"It then goes through several other machines, by which it is carefully combed and freed from impurities. A machine called a 'slubber' then takes it up, and twists it out into soft white yarn.

"This is carefully combed again, and it is then taken into another department, where several small strands of this yarn are twisted together, and you then have six-cord thread, which, after it is bleached, is ready for the market.

"Another interesting thing is the numbering of the thread. Every lady knows the size of the thread that she requires for doing a certain piece of work, but very few of them how it came to be so numbered.

"You see, when cotton thread was first made eight hundred and forty yards of it weighed just one pound. This was called No. 1, and if a pound contained just twice this number of yards it was called No. 2, and so on."

AFTERNOON TEA.

Oliver Wendell Holmes has recently defined afternoon tea as "giggle, gabble, gobble and git." As for the "gabble," it is a comparartively charitable version of the scandal which is always associated with the steam of the teapot.

Why do "tea and scandal" appear to go so naturally together? The association is of long standing. In Restoration days, when tea was sold at from twenty to fifty shillings a pound, it was as popular with the ladies as at any subsequent period, and the talk appropriate to tea-drinking was of the true scandalous quality.

In Congreve's "Way of the World," Mirabel speaks of "genuine and authorized tea-table talk—such as mending of fashions, spoiling reputations, railing at absent friends, and so forth."

And in an earlier comedy, "The Double-Dealer," by the same dramatist, when one asks where the ladies are, he is told that "they are at the end of the gallery, retired to their tea and scandal, according to their ancient custom, after dinner."

It is evident that scandal was ungallantly associated with tea because the latter was at first, and for many a long year thereafter, peculiarly a woman's drink. The men of the last century were accustomed, like Squire Western, to sneer at tea and coffee as "slops," while members of the male sex who, like Cowper, avowed their liking for the mild delights of the teapot were put down as milksops.

No one, however, ventured to describe Dr. Johnson as a milksop, although his devotion to tea was unbounded. "I suppose," says Boswell, "no person ever enjoyed with more relish the influence of that fragrant leaf than Johnson. The quantities which he drank of it at all hours were so great that his nerves must have been uncommonly strong not to have been extremely relaxed by such an intemperate use of it. He assured me that he never felt the least inconvenience from it; which is a proof that the fault of his constitution was rather a too great tension of fibres than the contrary."

De Quincey was almost as fond of the fragrant infusion as the lexicographer himself. In the pleasant picture which the essayist gives us of the interior of his northern cottage, on a winter's evening, when the mountain winds are roaring fiercely outside—the small room populous with books, warmed by the blaze of a cheerful fire, the flickering light of which is reflected from "furniture plain and modest, befitting the unpretending cottage of a scholar"—in this sanctum the tea-table stands by the fire, and on it is an "eternal teapot," for, says De Quincey, "I usually drink tea from eight o'clock at night to four in the morning."

This is quite worthy of Dr. Johnson; but tea consumed in such a fashion was almost as unwholesome as the other beverage—the ruby-colored drug in the large decanter—which disputed with the teapot the command of the opium-eater's table.

De Quincey took high ground in his defence of the cups that cheer. "Tea," he says, "though ridiculed by those who are naturally coarse in their nervous sensibilities, or are become so from wine-drinking, and are not susceptible of influence from so refined a stimulant, will always be the favorite beverage of the intellectual."

In these later days tea is as popular with most men as with women and the old sneer at tea-table talk has rather lost its point. Perhaps we may take refuge behind the Quinceyan axiom, and claim that we have all become intellectual. Or is it that we have all become artistic, and are unable to resist the appeals which pretty porcelain, dainty napery, and other graceful accompaniments of five o'clock tea make to our æsthetic sense? Or again; is the real reason of the increased popularity of tea among men to be found in the process at which De Quincey hints—in the decay of the habit of hard drinking, and in the consequent increased sensibility of the palate to the delicate fragrance of the Indian and Chinese leaf?

THE SPENDING OF MONEY.—To be able to part with money without any reason to regret it afterwards is one of the most valuable of acquisitions, sometimes learned through painful experiences and sometimes never learned at all. A contemporary says, "It is often thought an indication of spirit in young men to have a certain profusion and recklessness in their way of spending money. They think it essential to their position to spend upon trifles of fashion and the demands of what is called good-fellowship sums which neither they nor their friends can well afford. If, instead of being considered a mark of spirit, this profusion were regarded by the young man and his friends as it truly is, as a mark of want of judgment and of genuine independence, much evil would be averted."

CATTLE ON BOARD SHIP.—Cattle are carried on the spar, main and steerage decks. A large steamship like those now used carries from 1,000 to 1,500 head. The compartments are just large enough to let the animals lie down or roll about a little. The beasts are tied in these immediately they are driven aboard. A stout rope is afterwards put about the animal's horns then passed through a hole in a 3-inch board at the head of the stall and knotted on the other side. Fresh straw is put into the stalls every day, and the animals are well fed and watered during the voyage.

TRUE MODERATION.—True moderation is neither tame, insipid, nor languid. It calls upon all the energies and all the power of nature for its development; it make us not less, but more manly and womanly—not less, but more determined and resolute—not less, but more hopeful and enthusiastic. It is not for age alone, when the passions may have cooled and the energies abated, but for youth also, when they are warm and strong. It embodies the force and vigor of youth, the wisdom and judgment of maturity, the calmness and experience of age.

KANSAS MORTGAGES.

The new mortgage law, permitting the mortgagor to retain possession for eighteen months after sale without paying interest or taxes, will cause many foreclosures.

ANGEVINE, CURRISON & COBB, (states att'y) Attorneys, Kansas City, Kansas.

REFERENCES:—
Horton, C. J. Supreme Court, Kansas.
Johnson, J. " " "
Northrup Banking Company, Kansas City, Kansas.

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It must be understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book.

By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

The Guide will be sent to any address, all postage paid, on receipt of FIFTY CENTS. Postage stamps, U's, taken. For Ten Cents extra a music book containing the words and music for 100 popular songs, will be sent with The Guide. Address—

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726 Sansom St., Philadelphia, Pa.

G. A. R. NOTICE!

We take this opportunity of informing our subscribers that the new Commissioner of Pensions has been appointed. He is an old soldier, and we believe that soldiers and their heirs will receive justice at his hands. We do not anticipate that there will be any radical changes in the administration of pension affairs under the new regime.

We would advise, however, that U. S. soldiers, sailors, and their heirs, take steps to make application at once, if they have not already done so, in order to secure the benefit of the early filing of their claims in case there should be any future pension legislation. Such legislation is seldom retroactive. Therefore it is of great importance that applications be filed in the Department at the earliest possible date.

If U. S. Soldiers, Sailors, or their Widows, Children, or Parents desire information in regard to Pension matters, they should write to The Press Claims Company, at Washington, D. C., and they will prepare and send the necessary application, if they find them entitled under the numerous laws enacted for their benefit.

Address

PRESS CLAIMS COMPANY,
JOHN WEDDERBURN, Managing Attorney,
Washington, D. C.
P. O. Box, 385.

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FOR INVENTIONS.

Equal with the interest of those having claims against the government is that of INVENTORS, who often lose the benefit of valuable inventions because of the incompetency or inattention of the attorneys employed to obtain their patents. Too much care cannot be exercised in employing competent and reliable solicitors to procure patents, for the value of a patent depends greatly, if not entirely, upon the care and skill of the attorney.

With the view of protecting inventors from worthless or careless attorneys, and of seeing that inventions are well protected by valid patents, we have retained counsel expert in patent practice, and therefore are prepared to

Obtain Patents in the United States and all Foreign Countries, Conduct Interferences, Make Special Examinations, Prosecute Rejected Cases, Register Trade-Marks and Copyrights, Render Opinions as to Scope and Validity of Patents, Prosecute and Defend Infringement Suits, Etc., Etc.

If you have an invention on hand send a sketch or photograph thereof, together with a brief description of the important features, and you will be at once advised as to the best course to pursue. Models are seldom necessary. If others are infringing on your rights, or if you are charged with infringement by others, submit the matter to us for a reliable OPINION before acting on the matter.

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☞ Cut this out and send it with your inquiry. ☜

Humorous.

HOLDING THE REINS.

We were riding in a carriage,
Sitting closely side by side,
My thoughts were all on marriage,
Yet my tongue my thoughts defied.
While riding by some quiet lanes
She said, with loving glances,
"Let me, Jack, hold the reins!"
'Twas then I saw my chance.

I asked her would she hold through life
The reins that guide my heart?
And asked her then to be my wife,
And drive, "till death us part."
She blushed, but softly acquiesced—
We were wedded in the fall.
What need is there to tell the rest?
She holds the reins—that's all.

—U. N. NONE.

His Fault.

Miss Rummit: "What made you stick so close to Mr. Fiddleback all last evening when you saw I was dying to talk to him?"

Miss Palisade: "Don't blame me, my dear. He begged me to do it."

Three things that rhyme—Boys, toys and noise.

"That air is very familiar," said the musician as a gust of wind took his hat away.

When a crate of crockery falls through an elevator shaft it's a little the worse for the ware.

What is the difference between bayonets and bullets?—Bayonets are driven, but bullets are lead.

A baker kneads dough because the public needs bread. We can see the sun rise and feel the sun rays.

"We're in a pickle now," said a man in a crowd. "A regular jam," said another. "Heaven preserve us!" moaned an old lady.

"My ole man," said aunty Chloe, "is the wust man for chicken you ever see. If he can't git a chicken no other way he'll go and buy one."

"Bill, you young scamp, if you had your due, you'd get a good whipping." "I know it, daddy, but bills are not always paid when they are due."

In Massachusetts, the other day, a man thought he could cross the track in front of a locomotive. The services at the grave were very impressive.

Effie: "Do you love me very much, mamma?" Mamma, a widow: "Yes, my darling." Effie: "Then why don't you marry the man at the candy store?"

Bessie: "The minister was real mean in church to day." Jessie: "Do tell me—that's a good girl." "He asked the congregation to join him in a prayer for rain, when he must have seen I had my new hat on!"

A commercial traveler saw a sign over a door with this one word, "Agoresqridore." He called to the woman to inquire what she sold, when she said she did not sell anything, but that "Agoes were cured here."

He: "When Mrs. Parvenu was poor they used to say she was a great talker, but since she became rich it is different." She: "Indeed! What do they say now?" He: "They say she is a brilliant conversationalist."

A prudent man always looks through his pockets at least half a dozen times before handing his coat to his wife to have a button sewed on; and even then he is filled with a nameless dread till the job is completed.

"Do you pretend to have as good judgment as I have?" exclaimed an enraged wife to her husband. "Well, no," he replied slowly; "our choice of partners for life shows that my judgment is not to be compared to yours."

A small boy of four summers was riding on a hobby-horse with a companion. He was seated rather uncomfortably on the horse's neck. After a reflective pause, he said: "I think if one of us gets off I could ride better."

An Eccentric Enemy.—A singular enemy of Prince Bismarck is a man in Potsdam who, by diligence and economy, from a simple mason's apprentice has become a capitalist and proprietor of several houses.

In his successful career he met with but one terrible blow, his only son having been killed in the war of 1870—a war and a calamity for which he has since held the prince responsible; and against him he wreaks the following original vengeance. He is the owner of a grave in the cemetery of Potsdam, where, since the interment of his son, he has erected a fine mausoleum, on the top of which is placed an artistically-sculptured owl, the head and features of which bear a striking resemblance to those of Prince Bismarck, the well-known "three single hairs" included.

A few years ago this man built a house, over the cornice of every window in which is carved a Bismarck head, the historical three hairs being represented in the shape of as many cannon.

Quite recently he built a house with the same portrait decorations, this time, however, letting three serpents take the place of the cannon as the prince's capillary ornament.

Hardly Successful.—A gentleman at the Cape of Good Hope had read much concerning the mesmerising power of man's steady gaze, and thought he would try his eye on an ostrich. At first the experiment seemed likely to prove successful.

The bird sat down, flapped its wings, inflated its neck, and struck its flat, stupid head against its hollow, bony body. But this effect was only temporary.

Several hours afterward the gentleman was found lying on his stomach, in such a position that his eye had no quelling power over the bird, which was alternately jumping and sitting upon the prostrate body.

The writer who tells this anecdote relates a little experiment of his own made upon a wild cat.

The cat, confined in a cage in a zoological garden, was stared at by the author, who confesses that but for the wire network he should have had his eyes scratched out by the little spitfire.

Ungallant.—Although American gentlemen have the reputation in Europe of allowing the female members of their families to do much as they please, they have not the name of possessing the quality which Frenchmen call gallantry. They are not makers of compliments.

In support of this view, a story told by an English-speaking guide in the Alps is repeated.

The guide was conducting through various points of interest in the mountains an elderly American and his somewhat querulous and fault-finding wife.

"In this direction," said the guide, "there is a most remarkable echo, which repeats clearly five times every word that is shouted. Shall I show it to you?"

"Well, I guess not," said the old American. "I can't holler none myself, an' I git words enough from my wife without hearin' on 'em five times over!"

Learning Chinese.—For lack of an alphabet, the labor of learning to read Chinese is great. Each character must be learned by itself, says a recent visitor to the Flowery Land, and when the student has mastered a thousand, or five thousand, the following thousands have to be learned, one at a time, in the same way. Previous study gives nothing more than a certain familiarity with the peculiar form which distinguishes each character from its fellows. Little wonder that Chinese education is practically limited to reading and writing, with a few scraps of history and moral science and mythology. Reading and writing occupy the pupil's time every day from five years of age until he is fifteen or twenty. No native Chinese pretends to know all the characters in the language, and no foreigner ever fully masters the art of reading it.

No Match Maker.—The learned Dr. Brimstone was once interviewed by a homely couple from a distant parish, who were quite unknown to him. Their object was to get him to interest himself in their son, who had fallen in love with a lovely girl in his congregation, to introduce the young couple, and to favor his suit.

In speaking, they persisted in calling him "Dr. Brimstone."

At length, tired of their importunities, he arose and dismissed them, on the plea of an urgent engagement saying—

"Excuse me, my friends, but my name is not Brimstone, and I don't make matches."

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Inventors of the CELEBRATED GOSSAMER VENTILATING WIG and ELASTIC BAND TOUPEE.

Instructions to enable Ladies and Gentlemen to measure their own heads with accuracy:

FOR WIGS, INCHES.	TOUPEES AND SCALPS, INCHES.
No. 1. The round of the head.	No. 1. From forehead back as far as bald.
No. 2. From forehead over the head to neck.	No. 2. Over forehead as far as required.
No. 3. From ear to ear over the top.	No. 3. Over the crown of the head.
No. 4. From ear to ear round the forehead.	

They have always ready for sale a splendid Stock of Gents' Wigs, Toupees, Ladies' Wigs, Half Wigs, Frizettes, Braids, Curls, etc., beautifully manufactured, and as cheap as any establishment in the Union. Letters from any part of the world will receive attention.

Dollard's Herbanium Extract for the Hair.

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Also DOLLARD'S REGENERATIVE CREAM to be used in conjunction with the Herbanium when the Hair is naturally dry and needs an oil.

Mrs. Edmondson Gorter writes to Messrs. Dollard & Co., to send her a bottle of their Herbanium Extract for the Hair. Mrs. Gorter has tried in vain to obtain anything equal to it as a dressing for the hair in England.

MRS. EDMONDSON GORTER,
Oak Lodge Thorpe,
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Very respectfully,
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Ex-Member of Congress, 5th District.

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Leave Twenty-fourth and Chestnut Sts.

3.55, 8.20, 9.25, 11.35 a m, 12.57 (dining car), 3.33, 5.20, 5.15 (dining car), p m. Sundays, 3.55, 9.40, 11.15 a m, 12.57 (dining car), 3.33, 8.20, 8.15 (dining car) p m.

LEAVE MARKET STREET STATION.

7.30 (Pioneer two-hour fast line), 8.30, 9.30 a m, 1.30, 4.05, 5.15 p m, 12.01 night. Sundays, 8.00, 10.00 a m, and 5.15 p m, 12.01 night. Additional trains from Ninth and Green, week-days, 3.05 p m. And for Trenton, week-days, in addition to above, leave Ninth and Green streets, 2.20, 3.15, 5.45, 6.20, 11.15 p m. Sundays, 9.15 a m, 5.30, 10.15 p m. Bound Brook, week-days, 4.31 p m.

Close connections for New York are made at Wayne Junction with trains from Twenty-fourth and Chestnut streets by local trains leaving Market street at 11.02 a m, 12.37, 3.07, 6.07, 7.39 p m. Sundays, 10.47 a m, 12.42, 3.72, 6.07, 7.37 p m.

Leave New York, foot of Liberty street, 4.00, 7.45, 9.00, 10.00, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 3.15, 3.30, 4.00, 5.00, 6.10 7.30, 8.45 p m, 12.15 night. Sundays, 8.30, 9.00, 10.30, 11.30 a m, 1.30, 3.30, 5.00, 6.30 p m, 12.15 night.

Parlor cars on all day express trains and sleeping cars on night trains to and from New York.

For Schuylkill Valley Points.

8.10 a m for Reading, Barto, Harrisburg, Pottsville, Allentown, Shamokin and Williamsport.

7.40 a m for Reading, Pottsville, Chester Valley, Pickering Valley and Perkiomen Roads.

8.35 a m Express for Reading, Pottsville, Allentown, Harrisburg, Carlisle, Gettysburg, Shippensburg and Williamsport.

10 a m for Reading, Harrisburg, Gettysburg, Carlisle, Shippensburg, Lancaster, Pottsville, Shamokin, Bloomsburg, Danville and Williamsport.

12.45 p m for Pottstown, Barto and Reading.

1.40 p m for Reading, Pottsville, Harrisburg, Chester Valley, Pickering Valley, Colebrookdale and Perkiomen Roads.

4 p m for Reading, Pottsville, Allentown, Harrisburg, Shamokin and Williamsport.

5.30 p m for Reading and Pottsville.

6 p m for Harrisburg, Pottsville, Shamokin, Bloomsburg, Danville and Milton.

7.35 p m for Reading and Harrisburg.

11.30 p m Daily Sleeping car line for Pottsville, Shamokin, Williamsport. Connects for Lock Haven and Clearfield, except train leaving Philadelphia Saturday night.

SUNDAYS—8 a m for Reading, Pottsville, Shamokin, Harrisburg.

8.30 a m for Reading, Pottsville, Harrisburg and Allentown.

8.15 a m for Reading and Downingtown.

9.05 a m. Express for Reading, Pottsville, Harrisburg, Shamokin and Williamsport.

5.30 p m for Reading, Pottsville and Chester Valley Railroad.

7.15 p m for Reading and Harrisburg.

11.30 p m. Sleeping Car Line for Pottsville, Shamokin, Williamsport and Beech Creek Railroad.

LEAVE NINTH AND GREEN STS.

FOR BOSTON, via Poughkeepsie Bridge, New England Night Express (Pullman Buffet Sleeping Car) leaves Twenty-fourth and Chestnut streets at 6.30 p m, and Ninth and Green streets at 6.45 p m every day.

BUFFALO, ROCHESTER, NIAGARA FALLS and CHICAGO, 9.00 a m, 4.25 and 9.30 p m daily. The 9.00 a m train has parlor cars to Buffalo, and the 9.30 p m train sleeping cars to Buffalo Niagara Falls and Toronto.

FOR BETHLEHEM, EASTON AND POINTS IN LEHIGH AND WYOMING VALLEYS, 8.40, 8.55, 9.00 a m, 12.00 noon, 2.00, 3.55, 4.30, 5.30, 6.45, 8.25, 9.30 p m, and Bethlehem only 10.30 p m. Sundays, 8.30, 9.00, 9.30 a m, 8.40 and 8.55, 9.30 p m, and Bethlehem only 9.30 p m.

For Schuylkill Valley Points.

9.10 a m for Reading and way points.

11.02 a m for Pottstown and Barto.

1.35 p m for Reading, Pottsville, Harrisburg and Branch Roads.

4.35 p m for Reading and Branch Roads.

Sundays—11.45 a m for Pottstown and Barto.

5.40 p m—for Pottsville, Harrisburg, Byers, Barto and Allentown.

FOR ATLANTIC CITY.

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Returning, leave Atlantic City, week-days—Express, 7.00, 7.45, 9.00 a m, 3.30, 5.30 p m. Accommodation, 8.15 a m, 4.30 p m. Sunday—Express, 4.00 and 5.00 p m. Accommodation, 7.15 a m, 4.30 p m.

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Williamsburg, Glassboro and Mullica Hill, 8.30, 11.00 a m, 4.30, 5.45 p m. Sundays, 8.00 a m, 4.30 p m.

Clementon, 8.00 a m, 3.30, 11.00 a m, 3.05, 4.30, 5.45, 6.30, 7.30, 11.30 p m. Sundays, 8 a m, 3.00, 4.30 p m.

Blackwood and Gibbsboro, 8.30, 9.15, 11.30 a m, 2.30, 4.45, 5.30 p m, and 11.30 p m on Thursdays and Saturdays only. Sundays, 8.30, 8.00 a m, 4.45, 5.30 p m.

For Vineland, Bridgeton, points on Maurice River Railroad, 8.00 a m and 4.30 p m.

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